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Fiftieth Session

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Official Records

President: Mr. Freitas do Amaral . . . . (Portugal)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Abibi (Congo), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

Agenda item 12 (*continued*)

Report of the Economic and Social Council

Report of the Secretary-General (A/50/847)

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Group of Experts on Public Administration and Finance on its twelfth meeting (A/50/525)

Letter from the President of the Economic and Social Council to the President of the General Assembly (A/50/926)

Draft resolution (A/50/L.69)

The Acting President (*interpretation from French*): This morning the Assembly will continue its plenary meetings devoted to public administration and development. I call on Mr. Aleksei Yemelyanov, President-Rector of the Russian Academy for Public Administration under the President of the Russian Federation.

Mr. Yemelyanov (Russian Federation) (*interpretation from Russian*): As others have done, I wish to thank the United Nations for paying such great attention to the question of public administration and development, which is a requirement of our existence.

In today's world, many global problems can be resolved only through the efforts of all States in the international community. In the dynamic development of each country, problems arise that require Member States and their administrations to make new efforts and adopt new approaches. This applies to all countries, including Russia.

I would like to stress one fundamental issue relating to the problems faced by Russia and, to a certain extent, by all former socialist countries. All countries go through certain transitional stages in their development, but in these countries certain basic values are being maintained, especially with respect to property, entrepreneurship and the spiritual values of society. In Russia and in other former socialist countries those values were, for decades, kept in the background. Now Russia is faced with specific new problems in its transition to the norms of civilized society.

Russia has gone through major upheavals in the course of the twentieth century. The State system, the social order and the political order have changed twice. Though the country's economy has been seriously weakened, our people's determination, courage, traditions, and strong belief in the future have made it possible for Russia to come back to life, and we are absolutely certain that Russia is now doing so.

This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, *within one month of the date of the meeting*, to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, Room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

At present Russia is consistently implementing profound political and economic reforms. It has created a legal and institutional basis for the promotion and protection of human and civil rights and freedoms. For the first time in its history, Russia is initiating major transformations in circumstances of civil peace, through the free expression its citizens' will.

As enshrined in its Constitution, which was adopted in a nationwide referendum, the Russian Federation is a democratic, federal State of law with a republican form of government. The State authority in Russia, which is divided into legislative, executive and judiciary branches, is vested in the President of the Russian Federation, the Federal Assembly and the Government and courts of the Russian Federation.

It must be admitted that the establishment of a new State system in Russia is a painful process. It is of critical importance that the unity and integrity of the Russian Federation have been preserved during the reform process. The process of building federal relations has generally been quite successful, though somewhat restrained. We can now say that the hardest period of reform in Russia is behind us. We have gone through a critical period during which, by necessity, living standards declined and the foundation of a new society with a market economy, based on law, was established. The philosophy of the people and the ideology of the economic system have changed.

Even under the Government of Mikhail Gorbachev, private property and entrepreneurship were considered subversive and were not dealt with in the implementation of legislation. Having been a Deputy during the Gorbachev period, I can attest to that fact. Since then, a stable class of property-holders has emerged, and now even communist programmes include concepts of entrepreneurship and private property. Although some changes may take place in the balance of political forces, they will not be radical. However, adjustments and corrections will be made. Our people now enjoys freedom. All these developments reflect the fact that movement towards democratization and reform in Russia is irreversible. There is no turning back.

As President Yeltsin has repeatedly stressed in his campaigns, we are in a new stage of Russia's transition, posing new problems for our State and its bodies. This has raised certain questions. It is very important to determine the extent of the State's participation in resolving all the problems relating to the country's development in the face of these radical transformations.

In this context, it is important that there be a division of power between the centre and the regions and a balance between the State sector and the actions of free, private market mechanisms. Previously, there were extremes in this area, ranging from extreme centralization within regions to excessive federal sovereignty. A reformed role for the State in the economic system is being worked out, mistakes are being corrected and extremes moderated. Other reform issues are also being addressed.

With regard to the determination of various forms of property, our approach to privatization and our policy on determining the income levels of different population groups, I wish to stress that our policy is based on the principle that it is better for different sectors of the population to have different living standards, with wealth stimulating entrepreneurship, than to have, as in the past, overall equality at a level of virtual poverty. Now the income differences between various sectors of the population are perceived to be unjustified, and efforts have been made to even them out through tax policies and social support for needy people who are unable to earn enough under current market conditions. All these initiatives are reflected in Russia's national report submitted to the United Nations.

At this stage in the reform process there is a great need for an effective civil service, and our Federal Assembly and President Boris Yeltsin are paying close attention to its development. In a 1993 decree the President approved the regulations on the federal civil service, and in 1995 the Federal Assembly adopted a law on the basic principles of the civil service of the Russian Federation. This was followed up by a number of presidential decrees and other legislation.

We admit that all is not yet in order in this area. For the time being, the Russian Federation's civil service lacks consistency and a system-based approach. The scientific foundation of the civil service is weak. The functions of different branches of the civil service at the federal and regional levels have not been properly apportioned, and job descriptions for civil servants at every level have not been clearly laid out. We are currently addressing those problems.

There are many personnel problems as well. Many people involved in public administration lack expertise in the area. We are working on these problems, taking into account, as we will continue to do, the recommendations made at the regional and interregional conferences, as well as those of the United Nations Experts on Public Administration and Finance. The reports of the Secretary-General and the Group of Experts provide a solid basis for the discussion of such issues. On the whole, we agree with the way the reports define the factors underlying the trends in the development of a public adminstration system, such as increasing interdependence in the world economy; breakthroughs in high technology and informatics; a larger role for the private sector and non-governmental organizations; transnationalization of capital markets, production and services; and a conceptual transition to a model of environmentally sustainable and socially oriented development.

We assess positively the activities of the United Nations in the field of public administration, in the framework of the United Nations programme in public administration and finance as well as in the activities of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), the International Labour Organization and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization in this area. UNDP has contributed significantly to the solution of practical problems associated with the development and enhancement of national capacity-building in European countries and countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States, including Russia, in the field of public administration, parliamentary activities, human rights, foreign aid coordination, promotion of foreign investments, military conversion, financial management, development of small and medium businesses and environmental protection.

We are in favour of enhancing this sector of the United Nations system and of giving due attention to the needs of countries with economies in transition. A number of recommendations by the Secretary-General and the Group of Experts deserve support. They include the establishment within the United Nations of a global information centre to deal with this subject, the strengthening of the capacity of the United Nations in the field of research and advisory services, technical assistance to strengthen institutions of public administration and democracy, private sector development, privatization, conversion of military production, the creation of national and regional civil servant training centres and the improvement of inter-agency coordination in the field of public administration.

It is crucially important that UNDP and IBRD continue to play an active role in strengthening national capacity-building in developing countries and countries with economies in transition in the field of public administration.

I am sure that the discussion of the problems of public administration and development at this session will help us all to better understand international experiences in this sphere and for each country to draw adequate and useful conclusions.

The Acting President (*interpretation from French*): I call on Her Excellency Mrs. Juliette Bonkoungou, Minister for the Civil Service and Administrative Modernization of Burkina Faso.

Mrs. Bonkoungou (Burkina Faso) (*interpretation from French*): I am especially honoured to speak at this resumed fiftieth session of the General Assembly on the subject of public administration and development. The Government of Burkina Faso welcomes this resumed session because it reflects our concern to establish a public service which favours development as a means of achieving stability and social peace.

To our mind, history will remember the late 1990s has having been marked by four major developments. The first is the technology boom, especially in the area of communications: today's "information super-highway" and human contact not only with the Moon but with many other heavenly bodies. The second is the end of the cold war — but with the resurgence or persistence of many conflicts around the world, with their attendant problems of famine and disease and with refugee populations wandering from place to place. Third is the persistence of underdevelopment, in spite of the large amounts of money made available as official development assistance. The final development is the persistence of poverty and the emergence of unprecedentedly severe poverty and unemployment — at a time when a "post-development" era is being discussed.

This situation makes it harshly imperative that States to adopt the strategy of directing and protecting society, safeguarding the environment, pursuing relevant macroeconomic and macro-institutional policies, and ensuring social welfare and fairness.

Several questions arise here. Can it be that there are problems of public administration that have been incorrectly identified or not identified at all? Has reform been properly defined and addressed in the field of public administration? Why have the national capacities of developing countries remained immature even after 30 years of aid and financing? There are many questions. But the answer, in part, is that the growing demand for the State to regulate society, develop macroeconomic and macro-institutional policies, promote social equity and protect the environment has been accompanied by many theories promoting the privatization — indeed the ultimate disappearance — of the State and of State administration. This sometimes creates confusion at the highest level of authority. Studies by prominent specialists have authoritatively shown that the social and political upheavals and economic crises that followed independence in Africa, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, can be largely attributed to the shortcomings, dysfunction and lack of regulation of public institutions.

Here, Burkina Faso would support any endeavour to find a new approach to achieving excellent, effective administration. That is why we welcome the Assembly's consideration of the item entitled "Public administration and development". My delegation will contribute to the debate by speaking about Burkina Faso's experiences in the area of reform and of our current prospects, and about our expectations for this session.

There have been three principal stages in Burkina Faso's experience in the area of reform, corresponding to different approaches to administration. These reflect two different concepts of the role of the State. The first stage, from 1974 to 1989, was marked by a statutory approach that placed reform of personnel statutes at the centre. This reduced public service to a matter of administration, while it is but one of its components. This first approach to reform concentrated on personnel statutes, and quickly revealed its limits.

The second phase was based on reducing the costs of the functioning of public administration. It was closely linked to our structural adjustment programme, and began in the early 1990s. Here, reform efforts were aimed primarily at restoring macroeconomic balance, the breakdown of which had been attributed, *inter alia*, to the fact that payroll had grown too quickly, leaving little for capital investment. The measures involved personnel cuts, a promotion freeze in the civil service, and limiting recruitment to priority sectors.

This approach to reform did not yield all the expected results, and in 1991 the third stage began; here we opted for a comprehensive approach to reform with the creation of a Ministry for Public Administration and Modernization. This third stage, now under way, is intended to be comprehensive, integrated and systemic. It has two phases. The first is basically centred on enhancing effectiveness, with the adoption of a plan of action for modernization taking into account all the elements of the system of governance. We are seeking here to strengthen the authority and relevance of the State by refocusing its role on its fundamental missions, which include the exercise of sovereignty, improving regulation and monitoring, strengthening democracy, and improving transparency and accountability.

Our achievements to date have involved the management of human resources and structural elements, involving primarily personnel management through the creation of computerized files, carrying out large-scale training activities, and engaging in a major organizational programme for all ministerial departments and institutions.

In the area of financial management, we have acted to reform our system of public bidding, computerize public expenditure records, and reorganize national structures for collecting and processing statistical data. And in the social sphere, we have completed a study profiling poverty. For submission to the third round table of donors to the fund for Burkina Faso, at Geneva, we have prepared a letter of intention with respect to sustainable human development.

In the sphere of administrative democracy, we have created several administrative councils for ministerial sectors and hold an annual conference on public administration, which allows us periodically to take stock of administrative activities with the participation of worker representatives. All these elements are now complemented by the guidance of our Head of State, His Excellency Mr. Blaise Compaoré, who, in a statement on the anniversary of our country's independence, said,

> "In our comprehensive approach we must set up a coherent system of governance, involving transparency in political and administrative activity linked to a realistic but promising economic programme of action. For us, good governance should be a goal and a means of development, guaranteeing full participation by all in national development. The lesson to be drawn from various sectoral consultations is that we must establish a national plan of good governance."

In line with that statement, a number of days of reflection on governance have been held, which have enabled us better to form our concept of development in

Burkina Faso and the institutional framework for it. In the area of strengthening democracy, for example, the national debate has led to the grouping of political parties with a view to simplifying the political landscape, thus encouraging development.

In order to seek greater transparency, we plan to strengthen our key institutions: the Assembly and the judicial system. Pressure groups and lobbying groups such as consumer associations and human rights groups are also involved in the consultations. Moreover, we are placing special emphasis on traditional African values. There will be a study enabling feedback on the results to be taken into account in the promotion of public administration for development, for we have seen African societies striking a unique balance between individual and collective values, between competition and solidarity. Our goal is to establish systems, methods and practices of public management that are in accordance with standard wisdom, but also politically and socially acceptable and feasible in a Burkina Faso context.

The Government of Burkina Faso's activities in the framework of this new comprehensive view of public administration reform have been based primarily on lessons learned from the inadequate results of partial reform efforts.

We acknowledge the technical support of our development partners, including the United Nations Development Programme, the World Bank and Canadian and French agencies, to name only a few. We have also benefitted from subregional cooperation through organizations such as the African Training and Research Centre in Administration for Development and the Observatoire des functions publiques africaines.

Hence, on the basis of our own experience with devising and implementing reforms and on our participation in the discussion of administrative issues through such bodies as the Group of Experts on Public Administration and Finance, over whose twelfth meeting I had the honour to preside, my country has become increasingly convinced that subregional, regional and international cooperation in the field of public administration should be enhanced in order to support our efforts to effect change.

I am grateful to our partners, whom I have already mentioned, in particular those within the United Nations system, for their multifaceted support for our reform efforts. We support the recommendations of the Group of Experts, particularly regarding the following elements: an effective United Nations presence in the various areas of public administration, with a view to helping States in their reform efforts; including the item "Public administration and development" on the regular agendas of the General Assembly and of the Economic and Social Council, to give it its proper place at the heart of the development debate; resumption and strengthening of the United Nations role as the depository for innovative information on public administration, and development of its role as a centre for the exchange of experiences; strengthening the key role of the United Nations and the United Nations programme in public administration and finance in assistance to and reorientation of public services; and encouraging developing countries to adopt bold measures of support for national efforts and subregional bodies in the field of administrative reform, and pursuit of United Nations efforts to mobilize funds to help Governments implement their social development programmes.

I hope that, for all the countries present at this session, and certainly for my country, the conclusions that will emerge will provide a new basis for more comprehensive, deeper and more coherent administrative reforms. These conclusions could be a starting point for us to improve our capacity for analysis and integrate it into regional and subregional structures in order to make better use of our experiences for development.

I cannot conclude without expressing a special thought about peoples in conflict, the destruction of whose economies has been accompanied by the disintegration of administrative structures. I share their hope that the international community will be able to enhance its support for their post-conflict efforts to rehabilitate and reconstruct their States.

I hope for the complete success of the work of the fiftieth session of the General Assembly. Long live international cooperation! Long live the United Nations!

The Acting President (*interpretation from French*): I call next on His Excellency Mr. Luiz Carlos Bresser Pereira, Brazilian Minister of Federal Administration and Reform of the State.

Mr. Pereira (Brazil): I wish to congratulate the sponsors of the important initiative to resume the fiftieth session of the General Assembly to consider the item "Public administration and development" under the wise and competent presidency of Mr. Diogo Freitas do Amaral.

The Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, underscored yesterday the many challenges faced by developing countries in reforming their public sectors and in overcoming growing difficulties faced despite new national and global support for the efforts of those countries to improve public administration, in particular by the United Nations programme in public administration and finance and through activities of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

I understand that the United Nations had initially planned to hold not a special series of General Assembly meetings — which we are very pleased to be having — but a world conference like the other major conferences held in recent years. Ultimately this proposal was not accepted, especially by developed countries. I asked myself why this happened. There are two possible answers. The first would be that the subject is not relevant enough to justify a big special conference. The second would be that there are no new ideas that would justify such a conference.

Reading the report of the Group of Experts on Public Administration and Finance that serves as background for these meetings, I came to the conclusion that it is a very competent document, but a rather old one. The proposals it makes are old proposals, bureaucratic proposals. They speak of enhancing public-policy development capacity. They speak of strengthening financial management. They speak of developing human resources. They speak of improving efficiency. There is consensus about all these things; there is nothing new about any of them. For that reason, the developed countries were not interested in having a large conference. If there had been new ideas, given the enormous relevance that public administration and, more broadly, the reform of the State have been accorded in recent times, maybe there would have been a larger world conference.

In fact, it is not by chance that the United Nations is dealing with the reform of public administration. The reform of the State, and specifically the reform of public administration, has become a major concern of all countries in the 1990s. In Washington, the multilateral agencies — the World Bank and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development — have made reform of the State, and particularly the reform of public administration, a priority. Many countries, like mine, possess ministries with the mission of reforming the State apparatus, and in a broad sense reforming the State.

Why does the new relevance of this problem exist? I believe that there are two reasons. One reason is that in the 1980s most of our countries, including the developed countries to a lesser extent and excluding only the countries of East Asia and South-East Asia, faced a great crisis. In my view, this was a crisis of the State, or a crisis of government. It was a fiscal crisis of the State; it was a crisis in which the way in which the State intervened in the economy, and it was a crisis in the bureaucratic way in which the State was managed. These crises provoked the economic crisis, or in the developed countries a lower rate of growth compared with the decades following the Second World War.

There were three responses to this crisis.

One was the populist response: to ignore the crisis and continue with the old statist and populist policies.

The second was the neoconservative strategy: it proposed a minimal State, reducing it to a very small entity. But soon this second alternative proved unrealistic. It offered some good and relevant ideas and critiques, but the proposal was not viable. Besides, to reduce the State to a minimal entity in contemporary capitalism is impossible.

The third alternative, the only one possible, was to reform or rebuild the State. What was needed was a linear, much more efficient, citizen-oriented State. Costs had to be cut to help the process of fiscal adjustment, while efficiency had to increase in order to help citizens, who are the clients.

These kinds of ideas made public administration very important. A second reason for its importance was the increasing concern that had emerged in the developing and the developed countries about "rent-seeking". Rent-seeking is the appropriation of the State by private interests. In Brazil, the Left calls rent-seeking — a word invented by the Right — the privatization of the State, but they are the same thing. Both are concerned about protecting the public patrimony against greedy people and greedy interest groups.

Democracy has been the main tool for safeguarding the public patrimony, through a bureaucratic public administration in conjunction with a good system of protection. But this is no longer enough. In Brazil, since Fernando Henrique Cardoso became President, there have been developments with regard to public administration. An amendment to the Constitution is currently being discussed that would give it flexibility, allowing the administration to change from a bureaucratic public administration to a managerial public administration.

In addition, we have published a White Paper on the reform of the State apparatus, a White Paper which has also been issued in English. In it we diagnose the situation, showing how some elements of patrimonialism still remain in Brazil; how attempts to impose a bureaucratic public administration work only to a certain extent; and how at this moment the major objective is to make the transition from a bureaucratic public administration to a managerial one.

We believe that there are three types of public administration: patrimonial, which mixes the public and private patrimony; bureaucratic, which does not do this but is very formal and concentrates on processes, not outcomes; and finally, managerial, which concentrates on outcomes and is based on management contracts, in which enormous leeway is given to the agencies while requiring them to achieve the performance indicators included in the contracts.

This kind of reform has been discussed for the last 20 or 30 years. It became particularly important when the State fiscal crisis became clearer. The first country to successfully implement reforms in this direction was the United Kingdom. New Zealand also instituted very important reforms of this type, as did Australia. The United States is trying to achieve this through the "reinventing Government" programme. In Sweden, there are also some programmes with this aim.

And now we in Brazil are headed in the same direction. To this end, we first defined a kind of framework — the three types of public administration I mentioned earlier: patrimonial, bureaucratic and managerial. In a managerial public administration, the idea is decentralization and a strengthening of the core of the State, because the core must include very competent, well-trained, well-prepared civil servants who can define the agencies' objectives and seek that these be attained. Also, the agencies must be very independent.

This kind of administration is based on a certain trust. A bureaucratic public administration is based on a total lack of trust in people, which means that each step of the administrative process must be carefully controlled. This is not the case with a managerial public administration, which takes ideas from the private sector; however, it is very clear that private administration is one thing, while public administration is another. They have different objectives, but some tenets of private administration can and should be used in its public counterpart.

An important part of this plan is the division of the State into four sectors. We believe that each State — developed or developing — has the following four sectors: first, the strategic core, where laws and policies are defined; secondly, activities exclusive to the State, involving State power, activities that only the State can perform — police, taxation, regulation, fiscal policy and subsidization; thirdly, the non-exclusive activities of the State, comprising the areas of education, health care, culture and scientific research, which it performs or subsidizes because, perhaps, they involve human rights, or perhaps because the market might not fully recompense a certain activity, so the State must intervene, though the private sector can do that as well; fourthly, and finally, there is the production of goods and services for the market.

Given these four sectors, the question is, what type of administration should one have, and what type of property ownership? In terms of administration, as I have already mentioned, a transition should be made from a bureaucratic to a managerial public administration. But in terms of property the idea is that there are only two types of property in contemporary capitalism: private property and State property, which is synonymous with public property. We believe that this is not a good division, and that there exists a third type of property, which we call public, non-State property — referred to in the United States as non-governmental property. It is public in the sense that it is devoted to the public interest, and non-State because it does not belong to the State.

For example, foundations or universities in the United States are public, non-private property. In the United States, they say that they have private and public universities, but I do not agree. I think that all their universities are public, non-State entities, though there is some difference between the ones that are said to be private and have a smaller budget and more endowment, and those that have a larger budget and less endowment.

Our proposal is as follows for each of the four sectors. In the strategic core of the State, property has to be State property. In the exclusive activities of the State, again, property has to be State property. The production of goods and services for the market should, in principle, be private; that is why privatization is taking place throughout the world. Finally, we come to the non-exclusive activities of the State — education, health, culture and so on. In this sector, activities should not be private if they are being financed or subsidized by the State. However, neither should they be State activities, because they do not involve the power of the State. Therefore, they should be public, non-State activities.

In Brazil, to this end, we have chosen two types of institutions. In the exclusive activities of the State, where the power of the State is used, we propose to have autonomous agencies as the agents of this reform. In the non-exclusive services of the State, our proposal is to have social organizations — we invented this term — which would be public, non-State organizations, autonomous from the State, in whose management society would participate. These are the basics, but both types of institutions would be supported by the State budget and have management contracts with the strategic core.

These are the basic ideas that we are proposing in Brazil. They are not entirely new, as they are based on the experience of other countries, but I believe that they constitute a framework that merits further discussion.

The Latin American Centre for Development Administration is set to meet in Brazil at the end of the year. The Centre, of which I am the President, is a multilateral institution with headquarters in Venezuela. This large congress will take place in Rio de Janeiro in November this year. I hope that the United Nations will support it. The Inter-American Development Bank is giving it its full support, and I hope that many of those here today will also participate.

The Acting President (*interpretation from French*): I now call on His Excellency Mr. Saeed Al Ghaith, Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs, Chairman of the Civil Service Commission and Chairman of the Institute of Development Administration of the United Arab Emirates.

Mr. Al Ghaith (United Arab Emirates) (*interpretation from Arabic*): It gives me great pleasure, on behalf of the United Arab Emirates, to extend to Mr. Diogo Freitas do Amaral sincere congratulations on his election as President of the General Assembly. We wish him every success.

It also gives me pleasure on this occasion to thank Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, for his tireless efforts to enhance the role of the international Organization in the maintenance of international peace and security, and for his increasing concern with the question of administration and development. There is no greater evidence of this than the devotion of these meetings to this vital question.

At the outset, I should also like to thank the Group of Experts which has prepared and submitted an outstanding study on public administration. This question will always be of concern to States, organizations, individuals and the entire international community, because administration is the common factor in all aspects of life. Further, seeking administrative development is necessary in view of contemporary changes.

There is no doubt that the world is according increasing interest to the question of development and administration on the regional, national and international levels. Administration has moved to the forefront of development questions because it is the engine that drives all development organizations to achieve their goals. It has become clear that administration, as a profession, requires the creative application of scientific norms. Thus its practice will always be an art, because it consists of concepts, principles, modalities, thought and vision. In sum, administration is an entire way of life.

The Charter of the United Nations was drawn up while the world was still suffering from the aftermath of war. Faced with indescribable conflicts, the leaders of the world decided to do away once and for all with war. By way of affirming their faith in the dignity of man, they decided that it was necessary to achieve advancement and development for all peoples and countries. The result was the preparation of the most important political document known to the world, with the aim of maintaining peace and affirming the concept of peace and the importance of advancement and development.

Half a century has passed since the signing of the Charter in San Francisco, and while the world has not witnessed another world war, it is facing great challenges to administration and administrative development. Therefore, there is an urgent need for us to work side by side, as States, organizations and individuals, and for us to commit ourselves to joint responsibility and efforts for development. This presupposes a coherent fabric of administrative norms and ethics. There is a direct relationship between administration and development, because development questions are based fundamentally on administration, since development is not spontaneous, but, rather, is based on the presence of an integrated, updated and sophisticated administrative system.

Hence, the presence of public administration as a distinct element of all development activities is a foregone conclusion, since economic development depends on a successful administration in the phases of policy formulation and implementation. Also, public administration plays an undeniable role in the question of social development by formulating administrative programmes aimed at narrowing the gap between what is available and what is possible in the field of social development. Also obvious is the ongoing role played by public administration in developing the private sector in such a way as to organize and stabilize it. This is the concept of participatory development, which should be affirmed in our contemporary world.

The world of the last decade of the twentieth century is witnessing numerous and successive transformations in various aspects of life, whether political, administrative, economic or social. Furthermore, the world of today no longer has any isolated islands, since evolutionary trends have become the hallmark of our world. On the political, economic and sociological levels, it has become necessary and logical for administrations to keep abreast of prospects for development and modernization. The success of this evolution and renaissance will not be easy without administrative development.

In this regard, we would like to note that our State, which was established in 1971, has seen a very high-calibre administrative evolutionary renaissance in the public and private sectors, especially in the continuous review of regulations, laws and norms. The aim is to upgrade and streamline them, to restructure all State organizations and to introduce technology into all phases of work, in order to achieve accuracy, save time and enhance the capabilities of the staff to the greatest possible extent. This renaissance was the linchpin of the economic, social, educational and environmental renaissance experienced by our fledgling State. What happened in the United Arab Emirates in this regard is noteworthy, especially since at the inception of the State in 1971, the process was very difficult. But thanks to the determination and sincere will of our wise leadership, headed by His Highness Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al-Nahyan; his brother, His Highness Sheikh Maktoum bin Rashid Al-Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister; and their brothers, their Highnesses the members of the Supreme Council of rulers of the Emirates, the development of the Emirates has been achieved.

As a contribution to the desired administrative development, which leads to comprehensive development, we propose a general framework based on mechanisms for developmental cooperation between all States. One dimension of this framework is that of making the individual the main focus of development while striving for the greatest possible enhancement of human capabilities. The bases for such a framework are, first, interest in administrative training, not as an end in itself, but as an intermediate target and as a risk-free way to hasten improvements in productive efficiency and labour relations, while concentrating on the design of training programmes to bring about changes in the conduct of trainees; second, affirming that the role of administration should be humanitarian rather than mechanical and that this concept should be applied at all administrative levels; third, increasing concern with administrative technology, because it leads to the mechanization of routine administrative work and to increased production, together with decreased costs and guaranteed high levels of productive efficiency; the United Nations should play an auxiliary role through the provision of technical assistance; fourth, encouragement of specialized research to develop administrative work.

Fifth, the United Nations should facilitate the exchange of expertise between States, whether by supporting training consultancy or administrative information through the United Nations programme in public administration. Sixth, the Group of Experts should become a subsidiary of the Economic and Social Council, provided that the Group is reconstituted so as to guarantee the representation for economic and political groupings, and along lines of equitable geographical distribution; seventh, support should be provided for development cooperation between all States, especially between North and South.

Eighth, the United Nations should sponsor development projects that are of common interest to various States, especially those having to do with financial, economic, social and administrative questions, provided a strategy, including timetables, is drawn up for this target. Ninth, we recommend that each year a "citizens' service and administrative development" day should be declared, instead of the proposed "public service day", under the sponsorship of the United Nations and we believe that this should be an occasion for dealing scientifically with questions of development and advancement; tenth, the concept of developmental partnership should be introduced; eleventh, affirming the concepts of administrative decentralization should be affirmed and put into effect by means of streamlining procedures.

Twelfth, it should be taken into account that the organizational structure of administration should have a dynamic, not a static, base. Thirteenth, it should be emphasized that the employee is selected for the post, and not vice versa; fourteenth, concepts of administrative cooperation and quality should be implemented; and, fifteenth, we should accelerate the final drafting of the code of conduct for public service employees, which was dealt with at the Ninth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the Assembly for its kind attention while wishing it success always. May God's peace and blessings be upon it.

The Acting President (*interpretation from French*): I now call on Mr. Muhammad Majid, Secretary of the Economic Relations Division, Ministry of Finance of Bangladesh.

Mr. Majid (Bangladesh): It is indeed a great pleasure for me and my delegation to be able to attend this resumed fiftieth session of the General Assembly on public administration and development. The Government of Bangladesh attaches great importance to this subject, as it feels strongly that an efficient and effective public administration is an essential precondition for sustainable development, and especially for the alleviation of poverty. We are therefore honoured to be a part of this process of enhancing international responsiveness to the emerging challenges in the area of public administration and development.

The 1990s present complex and difficult challenges to the public administration and finance systems of most Governments. Many are now confronted with a myriad of internal and external factors which call for a targeted and pragmatic framework for an improved institutional set-up and capacity development. The Bangladesh delegation wishes to thank the United Nations for taking an integrated approach to our common endeavour in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 49/136, on public administration and finance. The essential parameters of our work were well articulated in the President's opening statement, while the reports of the Secretary-General and of the Group of Experts have provided a comprehensive overview of the issues relating to public administration and development, as well as of the role of the Member States and the United Nations.

We also owe a debt of gratitude to the Secretary-General, to the United Nations Department for Development Support and Management Services and to the esteemed Group of Experts, whose invaluable contributions in this uphill task have indeed provided useful groundwork for our future undertakings.

The challenges that most countries — whether industrial, developing, least developed or in economic transition — are facing today are complex and multidimensional. We live in a world of contrasts, where a fifth of the developing world's population goes hungry, while there is unprecedented affluence elsewhere and so much is wasted; where so many children do not live long enough to enjoy their childhood, while there are so many unnecessary weapons. Continuing globalization, trade liberalization and the use of market-oriented structures are being pursued, when the role of the State and the task of public administration are yet to be redefined. While the decentralization of governance and democratization have been integrated into the process of economic and social transformation, it is regrettable that the world economy is moving towards the marginalization of the low-income countries.

The desirable structure of a global arrangement should, in our view, rest on the following basic principles: first, the creation of a new vision for all aspects of development and governance; secondly, the development of an internationally accepted mechanism and strategies for the establishment of peace and security through reinforcing equity, growth and stability; and, thirdly, a process of free interaction between people and nations.

There is a growing trend towards some realignment of the relations between Governments, organs of civil society and private economic actors. In many countries, command-oriented policies, which tended to impede economic and social development, are being reduced. Paradoxically, this reduction in Governments' command function tends to increase the essential role of Governments in addressing issues which could not be addressed by either the market or civil organizations. Similarly, the experience of many countries undertaking programmes of structural adjustment has also highlighted the need for efficient State organizations to play essential roles in critical areas. Indeed, the eventual success of efforts to liberalize the market may often be seriously jeopardized by weaknesses in State and government infrastructure. In more specific terms, a strong and well-functioning Government is a precondition for, first, translating a sovereign people's wishes and demands into public policies and priorities; secondly, managing public resources effectively and efficiently in accordance with nationally established priorities; thirdly, reforming public administration with a view to enhancing government capacity to implement policies and strategies aimed at poverty elimination and the promotion of equity; fourthly, decentralizing and devolving governance functions in order to improve utilization of public resources and participation in decision-making, and, fifthly, involving civil society in policy development and programme implementation through improved dialogue between government and civil organizations.

Governments need administrative systems that can deliver for them in the face of mounting pressures. It is not simply that the number and magnitude of the problems are overwhelming; the problems themselves are deeply interconnected, and the succession of crises is also rapid. The bureaucratic organizations are not designed to cope with the situation, and public administration therefore needs to develop flexibility, creativity and a capacity for strategic thinking and management. Programmes for change or transformation therefore needs to be orchestrated in the national strategy in proper sequence. It is equally essential to implement them effectively. As a sixteenth century philosopher rightly said,

> "Change is not made without inconvenience, even from worse to better."

This implies that there must be continuity of leadership. In an era when change comes with bewildering rapidity, the Government must have a vision for the future.

Allow me to turn briefly to the situation in my country, Bangladesh. Strong political commitment is being forged to redress structural difficulties in development management and legal systems, decentralize governments and authority, enhance management accountability and responsibility, stimulate privatization and promote partnerships between government and civil society. Despite prolonged political difficulties in my country, there is a general consensus among all concerned about strengthening public administration and the need for greater transparency and accountability.

The role of the State is being redirected, from one of direct involvement in production to the functions of development, promotion and maintenance of an enabling framework. There has been a considerable shift in State machinery, including institutions, processes, personnel and the promotion of new skills, capacity and orientation among public officials to the changing demands. Promotional activities for private investment have led to a positive response in the private sector. The privatization of State-owned enterprises is under way. Democracy is taking root in all spheres. Our experience vividly demonstrates that without people's participation, the potential for socio-economic progress cannot be realized. Thus, we have taken a pro-people, pro-poor and pro-nature development approach in the public administration system. The setting up of efficient units, recognition of merit, skills, efficiency and competence in recruitment and promotion, greater transparency and accountability in the decision-making process, greater decentralization of the administration and performance appraisal systems in the civil service are some of our ongoing reform measures.

It is time we looked beyond the established paradigms and concentrated on some critical new strategies that emerged in the Secretary-General's report with regard to strengthening capacity and management efficiency in public administration, including, *inter alia*, public-private interaction, the role of public administration in promoting social development, developing infrastructure and environmental management and the planning, management and operation of development programmes. We are in broad consensus on the underlying themes and messages advanced by the Group of Experts at its twelfth meeting and also by the Secretary-General in his report in document A/50/847. We would, however, like to highlight certain aspects of public administration and development which we feel deserve adequate attention.

The role of the Government and public administration should be redefined, with functions such as peace, security, equity, social justice, environment and good governance to remain the essential functions of the State and public administration — the guiding principle being that the Government should withdraw from activities that others can do better. This also implies a facilitating role for the Government in creating an enabling environment for the private sector, local governments, community organizations and civil society in general.

The role of the Government in protecting the poor, the deprived and the disadvantaged should be acknowledged and strengthened.

Public administration has to play an integrative role in the face of possible social disintegration and lack of consensus in society. Conflict resolution, post-conflict restoration and rehabilitation of society are inevitably important, particularly in turbulent areas.

The support of the international community is badly needed to cope with the demands of reforms. Attention should be given to ensuring the flow of adequate resources to protect the poor against disruptions relating to market-oriented reforms. A major constraint that will influence the role of the State is the inadequacy of development resources at its command.

Training of civil servants should receive priority attention, in order that they may adequately respond to changes.

There should be continuous interaction with the informal sector to create an enabling environment with a view to encouraging the creativity of the disadvantaged sections of the community.

The new governance paradigm calls for more education and wider dissemination and sharing of information. There is a recognition that countries should learn from each other's experience in the areas of good governance and institution-building.

The United Nations could assist in the provision of information and training, especially in the establishment of training institutions or the improvement of existing institutions dealing with governance, and in the provision of information. The United Nations could also hasten the setting up of a clearing-house on management development which could be accessed by Member countries on a regular basis.

Governments must be reassured that external contributions to development are just that, and not interference in matters that internally may be seen as sensitive.

In an effort to develop competence and leadership, some strategic initiatives could be undertaken, such as, first, building competence in the development-management aspects of governance. The United Nations system possesses a reasonable capacity in this field. Secondly, an inter-organizational forum could be established for development management and governance. There is a recognized need for this within the United Nations system. Along these lines, regional sub-forums could be established to address particular development-management themes, such as institutional building or decentralization, or regional concerns. Thirdly, regional think tanks could be strengthened for the provision of advice on development-management issues to Governments and donors. Global networks of innovators could be established and managed in such fields as decentralization, non-governmental organizations, Government-civil society links and information-sharing; and, fourthly, the decentralized-governance programme of the United Nations system could be geared up for mobilizing additional resources to implement innovative programmes for system development and provide technical assistance and capital investment to developing countries in particular.

We recognize the inevitable role of the United Nations in public administration and development and believe that a strong institutional base in the United Nations system is called for. This notwithstanding, the question of public administration as a regular item on the agenda of both the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly needs further elaboration and careful thought. It might be useful to take the initiative to make the Group of Experts more effective at this juncture of the United Nations, when the operationalization of the activities of the United Nations programme in the field of public administration and development is more important. It should also be understood that national Governments should take the lead role, while the United Nations system is to offer catalytic support for capacity development, institutional strengthening, advocacy and understanding.

Let me conclude by reiterating that we are one single family with a common destiny, and we must be committed to a more prosperous global society. This resumed session should not be confined merely to heightening our awareness and indicating prescriptions: it must take concrete steps to realize goals.

Mr. Witbooi (Namibia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The Acting President: I now call on Her Excellency Ms. Claudia Bello, Secretary of State for the Civil Service of Argentina.

Ms. Bello (Argentina) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Let me express my satisfaction and personal pleasure at the opportunity to speak in this important forum. I also wish to convey to the President of the General Assembly my congratulations and those of the Government I represent on his excellent work. Under his outstanding leadership, I feel certain that our debate will lead to the most successful results.

The present offers us a political and economic environment in which each new issue of the international agenda has its own importance and sense of urgency. Furthermore, the dizzying speed of changes in mankind's modes of production and stockpiling leaves little room for reflection. Even so, the reform of the structures of the State and its most important tool, administrative reform, both central issues of this Assembly's agenda, clearly stand out because of their enormous significance.

The creation of a future in which democracy, justice and the efficiency of peoples give shape to an international order that is stable, lasting and worth inhabiting, will depend largely on the intelligence with which each of our countries performs this task and on the wisdom with which the national results of change are brought on the world scene.

Over the past three decades, since the advent of post-industrial society and especially since the recent disappearance of the paradigmatic alternative to the formula of "democracy and markets", almost all national societies on Earth have been making efforts, at great cost, to adapt to these new realities.

Much has been said about the inevitability of that effort and the irresistible demands of economic globalization. This vision does no justice, however, to the will shown in sacrifices by societies that supported and still support policies of change in the knowledge that, however bitter the immediate consequences, the sacrifice is unavoidable if they are to remain viable entities in the coming millennium.

Historically, Latin America has played a pioneering role in the debate on the problems of development. The region's initiative took shape even in the institutional context of this Organization, through the pioneering work of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. Since the days of that decisive contribution to the shape of the debate, its ideological and theoretical frameworks have undoubtedly changed. But a significant portion of that Latin American heritage remains relevant.

First, the need to maintain a debate on the economic and social development of peoples has not disappeared and is today even more pressing, as evidenced by today's meeting. Furthermore, a substantial part of that Latin American contribution was the adoption of the formula "development with equality", in which both elements share the same importance. Equality is not simply a possible effect, but that which gives ultimate meaning to the concept of development.

States and public administrations, beyond ideological and theoretical shifts, retain the unshirkable responsibility to fulfil that twofold objective in the near future. From this standpoint, the role of social innovators that falls to members of the civil service becomes self-evident. This is the key challenge facing our generation.

Latin America's contribution has not been limited to original ideas. During the past 15 years, the region was buffeted by crosswinds as it strove to build and sustain democratic systems, digest extremely harsh monetary discipline, accept the imposition of the rules of the world market and see its States reform themselves in ways that often seemed like an abandonment of the social process. None of this has yet prevented continental peace and the hegemony of pluralistic coexistence from remaining essentially strong and secure.

The situation gives cause for much-needed optimism, but it should not blind us to the risks we continue to face. The concentration of wealth, an inevitable result of modernization; the parallel explosions of rates of poverty and social marginalization; the emergence of the phenomenon of structural unemployment uncoupled from cycles of economic growth; and an extreme belief in market primacy which, without a strong State, could become an undesirable black market: these are some of the darkest points on our horizon.

The current moment in Latin America is critical. If some of these more negative trends should gain strength, we could see an abyss opening between State and society. The key to avoiding that gulf lies in our capacity to recognize, understand and integrate the demands, discontentments and aspirations of our societies.

There can be no coherent reform of the State — and, consequently, no development — without participation. The initial enthusiasm over the recovery of democracy in Latin America has faded. We are now facing cultural and social changes that involve a more limited and less intense form of social activism — activism that, in many cases, takes shape in ways we do not fully comprehend. It is from the State that we must encourage civic-mindedness, opening our doors to the citizen, returning to him the power he confers on us through legitimacy.

Argentina is clearly within this framework. It has participated and has surely contributed to the debate. The tradition of Argentina's concern for such issues as the reform of the State and administration can be traced back to the last century. But it is the more recent examples that are relevant here. The crisis of the model in which the State is the hub of activity came to a head late in the 1980s. The public sector, which had in the past been the most dynamic element of the economy, a motor for growth and development, gradually ran out of spending capacity, without financial backing and without the initiative to resolve the crisis in which it was the key player.

At the same time, the growing mistrust of civil society in the State's capacity to respond efficiently to its demands aggravated this crisis of the State as social manager and confirmed the obsolescence of a centralized system of economic regulation, State organization and social promotion.

The current Government assumed the responsibility of solving this enormous crisis through simultaneous processes. We re-established national unity, strengthened our institutions and stabilized the economy, thus avoiding social disintegration, while initiating structural reform of the State with the aim of salvaging its essential mission.

The Government held the view that the transformation of the State should arise from an appropriate redefinition of its size and role in society, especially in the economy. The concentration of essential functions and increased incentives in the context of a smaller but stronger public administration were the pillars of substantial improvement in the efficiency of the public sector. The most visible result of this policy was a marked improvement in organizational capabilities and administrative management.

The political objective was to make the 1990s the decade of growth. This decision required that the economy be freed from the burden of the fiscal deficit, which could be brought about only by making deep-going changes in the organization of the State, the level of public spending and the allocation of resources. This was, in sum, an integrated programme of structural reform of the public sector.

It is important to make it clear here that the Government I represent and the people that has granted it two successive mandates have not completed that task, nor will they complete those that remain, merely to create some dark utopia of a stateless society, abandoned to the primitive stage of human development in which life was brief, brutish and vile. On the contrary, President Carlos Menem has instructed his administration to move ahead towards the construction of a State of solidarity and efficiency.

The new State we are building is not a creation born in a historical vacuum. This State will preserve the best of our past, be responsive and determined in the face of the challenges of the present and look to anticipate the demands of the future. The new State will be the expression of an intergenerational commitment that, despite the awareness that perfection will always remain in the distance, seeks it none the less. It will be a new State because, when it finds itself facing a crisis — for instance, a natural catastrophe that devastates non-renewable resources — it will know that its role is not to explain such a crisis, but to respond swiftly, directly and efficiently. It will know that, if it is incapable of such a response, the bureaucratic labyrinth will make that intergenerational commitment a barren one.

The city came to embody the best aspects of the history of civilizations, a superior state of cultural evolution and development. The city was synonymous with democracy, protection from danger, artistic creation and progress. In its contemporary version — the mega-city — poverty, marginalization and abandonment often make democracy an impossible dream. The walls of the city that once protected us now crowd us and divide us, and the culture and technology that were once forces of integration are now forces of exclusion.

These problems cannot be addressed singly, as if they were whirlwinds and disturbances in a sea of calm. They are concrete examples of the challenges that public administration, as a visible expression of the State, faces today in allowing the pact between generations to continue.

Our statement is accompanied by a technical paper. I should like to take this opportunity to thank the experts of our Mission who helped to prepare it.

In conclusion, allow me to recall the old idea that, between thought and reality, there is a road that can be travelled only with the desire to do so. We want the new State to embrace equity and efficiency, and we hope that God will help us in our task.

The Acting President: I now call on His Excellency the Honourable E. T. S. Adriko, Second Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Public Service of Uganda.

Mr. Adriko (Uganda): I thank you, Sir, for this opportunity to address this Assembly on the question of public administration and development.

As is rightly observed in the two reports before us, good public administration is fundamental to the achievement of political stability and economic growth and development. At the same time, public administration as a system can thrive only in conditions of peace and stability. Because of the ever-changing understanding of the relationship of man with his surroundings — especially in his quest for sustainable livelihood — we all now agree that good public administration should be responsive to these needs and flexible enough to adapt to new challenges.

The ways in which different countries and regions will rise to these challenges will differ according to their technological, cultural, social, economic and even political setting. It is therefore not an overstatement when the Secretary-General characterizes this issue as complicated enough to warrant periodic debate in this Assembly; nor is it disproportionate to charge a group of people with the task of identifying its essential elements and recommending how national Governments, the United Nations system and the international community might help the process forward.

Allow me to share a few of our own experiences. Although substantial improvements have been made in the area of public-sector reform, further improvements are constrained by the weakness of our database on which such policy analysis could be based, as well as by the shortage of skills and the weaknesses of institutional structures. Therefore, our current and future efforts in this area should be directed at bolstering the database and strengthening both institutional and human capacities in essential areas.

In order to provide government with a different perspective on important issues and to enrich the policy debate, the process of policy analysis has been made more participatory by allowing policy to be generated by competent bodies outside the structure of government. For example, an independent economic-policy research centre has been established to raise and maintain standards of local research. The major areas identified include macroeconomic policy, agricultural policy, population policy, human-resource development and utilization, public- and private-sector management, environmental policy, industrial policy and the transfer of technology.

In Uganda, we have acknowledged the invaluable role of the private sector in economic growth and development. Government has taken a deliberate step to involve the private sector in the policy debate by soliciting the views of the private-sector associations and other non-governmental actors in the fields of manufacturing and commerce. This serves the dual objective of providing government with alternative views and at the same time contributes to the creation of a healthy business environment conducive to private-sector development. We agree with the Secretary-General's proposition that making this partnership work will require a re-tailored public administration.

Turning to the subject of improving civil-service systems in general, by the mid-1980s, because of civil strife, instability and State mismanagement, the Uganda civil service — which many observers had hailed at the time of independence as one of the best in Africa because of its efficient performance, motivation, adequate pay and equipment — had degenerated and become bloated, inefficient, unproductive, unresponsive to national needs and utterly demoralized.

In order to address these problems, and consistent with the Government's objectives and programmes aimed at building an independent, integrated and self-sustaining national economy and at the promotion of participatory and democratic governance, the Government set up the Public Service Review and Reorganization Commission 1988-1989 to examine and make recommendations on the public service with a view to instituting major reforms to make it efficient and responsive to the development needs of Uganda. In particular, the Commission was to address itself to four broad areas of concern: personnel and management issues, organizational structure, accountability, and financial management and conditions of service. The recommendations of the Commission formed the basis of the civil-service reform programme that is guiding the implementation of fundamental changes in the handling of public affairs and policy formulation in Uganda.

For strategic reasons, and because of the need to prioritize critical areas requiring immediate attention, the Government identified eight major reform components to be addressed. These are rationalization of government structures and functions, including the decentralization of powers to the districts; reductions in the size of services, including removal of ghost workers and use of voluntary retirement; enhancement of salary; monetization of non-cash benefits; personnel and establishment control; capacity-building; result-oriented management; and development of communications strategy.

The challenge is essentially to redefine the role of government in meeting the development needs of Uganda and to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the public sector in delivering these services. Towards this end, the Government of Uganda has had to put in place effective controls over public-sector employment in order to move towards providing civil servants with a living wage and attaining a stable budgetary framework. These changes were also essential for creating an institutional framework which would provide crucial incentives for changing attitudes and behaviour to those more in line with the needs of the result-oriented public sector, which is capable of adapting to changing circumstances.

The Government of Uganda considers that the attainment of these goals is feasible. I should like to highlight some of these issues and concerns.

With regard to the rationalization of Government structures and functions, the objective of the process of ministerial restructuring is to review the existing mandates, functions and staffing levels of all the Ministries and Departments, in line with the policy on the perceived role of government. The intention is to create a leaner, decentralized, better-paid and better-equipped civil service, which concentrates on the improved delivery of core services in a culture that rewards performance, honesty and a sense of public duty. With this in mind, the number of Ministers was reduced from 72 to 42. At the same time, essential services were devolved to the district level, and non-core services will be either devolved to the private sector or abandoned altogether. The task now is to ensure that this exercise is an ongoing process which anticipates changes, copes with emerging challenges and translates development consensus into practical and implementable components. The Government has accordingly established the Administrative Reform Commission as a vehicle for addressing further changes.

I turn to the subject of downsizing the civil service. As stated earlier, the other important element of the reform programme has been the downsizing component aimed at achieving an economically viable staffing level consistent with service delivery objectives and the need for better remuneration and reward in the public service. As a result of these measures, the Government has managed to reduce the size of the civil service from an initial maximum of 320,000 employees in 1990 to 140,000 by June 1995, where the number has stabilized. While we consider this reduction of 54 per cent in the number of staff members to be a major achievement, we concur with the Secretary-General's report that cost containment, downsizing, and issues of performance and effective management in human resources are difficult to put on a sustainable track unless they are viewed with a long-term perspective, and that these are issues that we should continue to address. This will certainly need cooperative efforts at all levels.

My next subject is establishment and staffing control. To ensure that proper control in establishment and staffing is maintained, it will be necessary for the Government to introduce a system-wide computerized personnel information system that will connect all arms of government and maintain information on manpower projections and needs as well as budgetary implications. The Government has set up a pilot scheme, the establishment and staffing control system project for the teaching service, which comprises 90,000 out of the 140,000 public servants, and the system is working very well. Another pilot scheme has been set up in the Ministry of Public Service. This should enable us to make more informed personnel decisions.

Now I turn to remuneration. Remuneration reform is one of the cornerstones of civil service reform, aimed at creating a well-motivated and results-oriented civil service. A number of critical political and economic problems and issues are being tackled in the remuneration reform programme. The solutions to these problems and issues not only require technical and political consideration, but must be matched by quality services that respond to the needs of society. In the quest for a lasting solution, the reform programme is being guided by a policy that aims, first, to make, or to contribute to making, the value of total remuneration more meaningful and transparent as progress is made towards a provisional minimum living wage, a goal we intend to achieve by fiscal year 1996-1997; secondly, to provide more flexibility in determining the appropriate salary structure, based on the importance of contribution and performance through job grading and performance evaluation; thirdly, to improve the equity between employees at the same grade; fourthly, to reduce the scope for abuses; and, fifthly, to provide the basis for more meaningful remuneration comparisons between the civil service and the para-State and private sectors. In this regard, the checklist of recommendations of the Group of Experts is a very useful addition.

As a component of the remuneration policy, non-cash benefits such as transport and housing are being monetized in order to introduce greater transparency and fairness and give employees more choice in using their income. In addition, administrative overheads are being reduced by privatizing provisional transport and housing.

With regard to staff development, the changes that have been introduced and implemented in the civil service require employees to be versatile, with renewed energy, knowledge, skills and commitment. A training plan has been drawn up, aimed at achieving the immediate skill needs essential for driving forward the reform process to provide the desired new era staff with results-oriented management techniques. The primary objective of the training plan is to provide skills and information technology, communication, managerial and technical training, office records management, staff and team performance appraisal and results-oriented management.

With regard to capacity-building, we believe that the stress should be on both human and institutional capacity and their related fiscal infrastructure. The Government of Uganda, through the National Technical Corporation Assessment programme, has published its policy on technical assistance, which essentially aims at boosting the country's human and institutional capacity to fully exploit all the opportunities that will make it possible for us to become self-reliant in the pursuit of integrated and self-sustaining economic development. Within this context, a large-scale retooling programme in the public sector is desirable, and we seek cooperative efforts in its further development.

I come now to results-oriented management. We plan in the course of this year to introduce into the civil service a results-oriented management (ROM) style which concentrates attention and resources on the achievement of definite measurable objectives within specified time targets. ROM is a strong contrast to the traditional control-based management style, which is characteristic of the civil service in many developing countries. ROM should ultimately lead to higher quality and better service delivery. As a prelude to this, a service delivery survey was recently conducted in a sample number of districts to establish the level of service being delivered to the people, identify best practice and obtain recipients' own opinions about how the service could be best delivered. It is planned that the survey shall become an annual event as a means of institutionalizing the feedback mechanism. The challenges of putting these innovative arrangements in place are enormous, and we will certainly welcome both technical and financial support in the process.

The reports and recommendations before us have helped to widen our horizons and put the issues involved in public administration and development in perspective. We are in a better position to assess our achievements and to gauge how much else remains to be done on a continuing basis. The new development paradigms, the challenges of breaking loose from the shackles of poverty and deprivation and coping with changed national and international circumstances, the precarious transition from crisis situations — all these dictate that we get together and collectively seek innovative solutions.

We have also found the proposals on sub-regional, regional and inter-regional exchanges and sharing of experiences in best practices to be practical and useful. My delegation therefore finds opportune the recommendations for continuous debate to ensure further exchanges of experience and plan future courses of action.

The Acting President: I call on the Permanent Representative of Tunisia.

Mr. Abdellah (Tunisia) (*interpretation from French*): First, I would first like to express my thanks to all those who mobilized to organize today's meeting, in which we are discussing and analysing a subject vital to all our countries: the link between public administration and development. I would also like to express my appreciation for the quality of the documentation that the Secretariat has made available to our delegations for this meeting.

With regard to the subject under debate, I am pleased to point out that the reform and modernization of the public sector in my country are perceived to be one of the foundations of innovations aimed at consolidating the democratic regime on the basis of political pluralism, respect for human rights and strengthening women's rights.

The modernization of the civil service and administrative reform are perceived to be powerful levers that should accompany economic liberalism, the encouragement of private investment, the opening of national economies to the outside, and their anchoring in the world economy. Reshaping the roles of public institutions and achieving greater effectiveness and efficiency in the function and activities of administration constitute the framework within which this transformation must take place.

This means, on the one hand, improving administrative capacity to realize in the field the economic, social and political objectives of the Government and, on the other, bringing about a reconciliation between the citizen and public services through the establishment of rules based on mutual trust, ready access to services and transparency.

Established policy is based on the following principles: reorganization of the administration; simplification of procedures and formalities; enhancing courteous treatment, information and orientation for the public; modernization of the administration apparatus through informatics and automation; and, finally, reform of the statute of the civil service and maximum utilization of human resources in administration. In this context, Tunisia has accorded priority to a pragmatic approach favouring actions in the field to diagnose inadequacies and to propose concrete measures to remedy them.

The State Secretariat for Administrative Reform and Civil Service, established in 1991, which is responsible for this entire project, was organized as an original structure along the lines of a nucleus from which radiated multidisciplinary working groups charged with achieving specific tasks within a particular time-frame. Each working group comprises a leader and various members chosen for their expertise in the area under study, who continue to work in their administrations or original sectors while supporting the programme of administrative reform in return for token remuneration.

These working groups are composed of businessmen, academics, journalists and civil servants. In addition, representatives of the liberal professions, such as lawyers; national representatives, such as deputies; and local representatives, such as municipal councillors, are also called on to take part in this new arrangement. The participation of representatives of civil society and members of non-governmental organizations concerned with the subject at hand can also enrich the work of the team with their own particular contributions.

Within the framework of this new concept, each team diagnoses and analyses the subject it has been assigned and compares its own conclusions with those drawn from similar experiences in other countries. The programme of administrative reforms has to date involved some 100 workshops, carried out by some 100 multidisciplinary teams, which have dealt with such interesting subjects as private investors, citizens in general, the problems of decentralization and administrative modernization in general. These subjects were examined in the context of the following considerations: the legal framework and incentives for private investment; the creation of economic conditions necessary for the development of private enterprises; the reallocation of the roles of the public and private sectors; and, finally, measures for raising environmental awareness.

With respect to the re-energization of the private sector and its harmonious coexistence with the public sector, we should point out that to create favourable conditions for the promotion of private investment and to encourage the emergence of new entrepreneurs, the Tunisian State has taken vigorous action in the area of financial and tax incentives, as well as in the reallocation of roles between sectors.

A new investment code for Tunisians and foreign nationals came into force in January 1994. This new code confirms the dynamic of liberalization and reinforces the opening of the Tunisian economy to the outside. It has established the principle of freedom to carry out projects without prior authorization. It is now sufficient merely to deposit a declaration of investment with the appropriate services. Foreigners can hold, without prior authorization, up to 100 per cent of project capital.

Other reforms affected the reallocation of roles between the public and private sectors. In 1989 Tunisia had more than 500 public entities. To date, these have been reduced by more than half, to a little over 200. Some 100 public enterprises in the country — 46 per cent — belong to a 10-year privatization programme covering the period 1990 to 1999. This programme of transfer and disengagement by the State was preceded by the restructuring of many enterprises that were in a financially precarious situation. We should also stress that more than three quarters of public industrial and commercial enterprises are operating today in a free market without any protection against competition.

This set of measures, which was designed to guarantee the success and durability of the public administration reforms, have made public control over foreign debt and rigorous financial management of public entities a main focus of the programme of economic restructuring in the country. The policy of financial rigour was implemented by a series of measures designed to stabilize public finances.

In 1990, in parallel to the public-finance reforms, the State undertook a series of reforms to modernize accounting and control systems for various areas of public spending. These reforms have made it possible to manage public resources better. The budget deficit is today at its lowest level, and in 1996 it will represent less than 2 per cent of gross domestic product. Rigorous management of public finances has also made it possible to have effective control over the country's index of foreign debt, which is now less than 50 per cent of gross domestic product, while debt-servicing is less than 19 per cent of current revenue.

Finally, to guarantee greater effectiveness in the current system of control and proper respect for established standards and rules of management, the State has adopted three main measures: the creation of a high-level committee for administrative and financial control that is linked directly to the office of the President of the Republic, to ensure better planning and coordination in the intervention of control bodies and efficient follow-up to the conclusions of their reports on the management and functioning of public entities; the creation of a system for following-up the conclusions of the annual report of the general accounting office on the management of State services and public enterprises and the recommendations of that high-level body for control of public finances; and the development of an information system for following-up the execution of public projets, to promote both implementation and respect for project plans, as well as to follow up undertakings and payments.

Those reform measures have contributed to strengthening the principles of accountability, transparency and ethics in the management of public services, thereby guaranteeing an integral and sustainable form of development that benefits all without exception.

Administrative reform thus represents the realization of political will at the highest level of Government to place public administration in the service of development and make it an effective tool to transform public and governmental concepts into programmes in the field. This has resulted in complementarity and interaction between various reform efforts, be they political, economic, social or administrative.

As for the contribution of the United Nations to this effort, Tunisia, which has a genuine capacity for identifying and formulating its needs, believes that useful multilateral cooperation could take shape in the following ways: first, assistance for the creation of a training centre, specializing in organizational development and managerial strategies in the public sector, with responsibility for training senior personnel in north African and sub-Saharan countries; secondly, assistance for the implementation of a programme of action for promoting quality in public services in developing countries; thirdly the setting up of a shared database on available expertise in African countries in the field of administration and public management, which would facilitate exchanges of expertise, respond better to the needs of developing countries and reduce the amount of money and time spent in resorting to international expertise; and, fourthly, greater, and more varied forms of assistance from the United Nations Development Programme for governmental administrative reform programmes and for upgrading public services in developing countries.

Tunisia is clearly ready to share with all interested countries its many experiences and the reforms that it has carried out in the field of administrative innovation and modernization of public administration.

The Acting President: I call on Mr. Chung-Hyun Ro, President of the Korea Institute of Public Administration of the Republic of Korea.

Mr. Ro (Republic of Korea): It is my great honour and pleasure to address this group of delegates at the resumed fiftieth session of the General Assembly. Today I would like to share Korea's experience in, and future plans for, public adminstration and development. At this session, I also look forward to learning about the lessons of other countries in the field of public administration.

Korea is rapidly changing as result of industrialization, urbanization and advances in technology, while its public adminstration is facing critical issues of democratization, decentralization and equitable and sustainable development. The Korean people are rightfully reaping the rewards of their economic success: greater social and political freedom.

As the Assembly knows, Korea did not achieve this stage of development without struggle. The Korean war, which lasted for three years, from 1950 to 1953, left the country in ruins and its people separated from their families by the thirty-eighth parallel. During the following 30 years the Korean Government naturally focused on reconstruction, and rapid growth-centred development, while the political struggle of the people continued. It was not until the late 1980s that that struggle set the nation on its inevitable course towards democratization.

On 16 June 1987 the nationwide movement marked its victory over the authoritarian military regime, leading to the election of the first civilian President in 1992. Yes, it is true that Korea has achieved its economic miracle by focusing on rapid economic development. However, it has not done so without paying a price. Although Korea now has the eleventh largest economy in the world, with a gross national product of $450.5 billion and an annual per capita income of $10,000, in many respects it still has much to strive for.

This is not to say that economic success did not play a critical role in promoting the general welfare of the people and democratization. It is important to remember that our experience has taught us that national development policies should be all-encompassing and balanced, addressing social, political and environmental, as well as economic, issues.

In the absence of a balanced national policy in Korea, the problem of social disparities — not to mention the environment — became acute. Also, as I have mentioned, until recently Korea suffered political oppression. As a result of the national security and economic objectives of the authoritarian regime, the issue of local autonomy was ignored, which in turn hindered the proper development of the nation's politics. In fact, under the Yushin Constitution of 1972, which states that

> "the local council shall not assemble until the reunification of the country",

genuine local autonomy ceased to exist. Now, however, with the strong movement to democratization and a change in national policy focus, the current civilian Government is taking meaningful steps towards addressing social issues, while promoting decentralization.

Last year, President Kim Young Sam made a public statement after the World Summit for Social Development, held in Copenhagen, stating that the Government would make a conscious effort to put greater emphasis on social development, with a view to gradually eliminating the problems of social disparity. It was in that spirit that the Government presented a new programme to reform the Korean education system. This programme includes open education, continuing education, learner-centred education and diverse and informative education.

In addition, on 17 June 1995, elections for local council members and executives were held, which revived the spirit of local self-government. The current Government's drive towards decentralization and political freedom is consequently promoting mutual cooperation and dialogue in Korean politics, which is a most important change for those of us in the field of public administration.

Also, in view of the changing political and economic order in the world and in its society, the Korean Government has declared globalization as its new national objective. I am pleased to say that Korea is actively taking measures to transform its economy into a free, global, market-oriented economy through deregulation and the implementation of an incentive system. Meanwhile, considering the potential power and benefit of the information superhighway, Korea's public administration has a great deal of work to do in this regard.

In view of the changes and challenges ahead for public administration, I would like to note here some necessary measures which I believe public adminstration should take so that it can competently and effectively initiate innovative and informative measures to seek globalization, improve the people's quality of life, push through further decentralization and democratization, and conserve the environment.

To this end it is critically important that public administration find a clear direction and define fundamental principles on which to base its actions.

With regard to direction, I believe that Korean public administration should perceive globalization as its objective and prepare itself for the challenges ahead. Meanwhile, its work should be based on a spirit of social equity and justice, which is fundamental for enhancing the quality of people's lives.

In addition, in working to enhance the quality of people's lives, public adminstration must bear in mind that that means all people, including those in North Korea, and humanity in general.

In that regard it is important that we exert our efforts to reverse the current trend in income distribution. According to the United Nations Development Programme, in 1992 the inequity in the world's income distribution was such that the richest 20 per cent of the world's population received 82.7 per cent of world income, while the poorest 20 per cent received only 1.4 per cent. In addition, in order to prevent a further widening of the economic gap between developed and developing countries, it is critically important to seek globalization with a view to promoting cooperation and mutual benefit, not just competition, among nations.

With respect to the culture of public administration, I hope that while public administration actively recruits and retains competent and talented officials, it will provide them with new, intensive programmes with a view to broadening their views on national and international issues. In this regard, I am confident that Korean public administration will take the necessary measures to change and improve its organization in order to build a better future for its people and for humanity in general.

In conclusion, I would like to express my hope that the United Nations will play a greater role in enhancing the management of public administration in developing countries. I believe that, with its 50 years' experience in the field, the United Nations can make a valuable contribution to improving our understanding of the role of public administration in development. To this end, the United Nations can share its knowledge and continue to promote international cooperation in the field, particularly by promoting meetings in which countries can share their views and experiences.

The Acting President: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Ignacio Zambrano Benítez, National Secretary for Administrative Development of Ecuador.

Mr. Zambrano (Ecuador) (*interpretation from Spanish*): It is a great honour for me, as representative of the Government of the Republic of Ecuador, to participate in the resumed session of the General Assembly devoted to the subject of public administration and development.

I believe that as part of the efforts being carried out by the United Nations and the Latin American Centre for Development Administration, a forum of this kind offers an excellent opportunity to exchange experiences and approaches. Accordingly, I shall briefly present the most notable aspects of the advances, achievements, obstacles and effects involved in this process.

The Government of Ecuador has laid out a long-term strategy for modernizing the public sector, with a comprehensive scope that can be summed up under three major headings: a policy-oriented view of development; modernization of the State sector; and modernization of public administration.

I shall refer first to the policy-oriented approach to development. Ecuador, like most countries of the region, is facing serious limitations and obstacles to development. For that reason we have embarked on a search for new alternatives that will make it possible to lay a foundation to bring about positive and lasting changes in the quality of life of our population. This means taking advantage of past experiences while adopting a new attitude of change, based on current technical and technological possibilities.

In recent years most of our countries have experienced political democracy coexisting with a partially State-controlled economic regime in which paternalism, monopolistic practices and administrative centralization have proliferated. This has produced an oversized, overactive State apparatus and a suffocating degree of regulation, leading to an administrative culture in which efforts and initiative are unproductively diverted away from, instead of being focused on, the enhancement of national creativity and production.

Various discussions have taken place in an attempt to deal with these limitations. Naturally, these involve a variety of interests and approaches. However, over and above ideological considerations, an economic and social system must provide equality of opportunity, justice, progress, and social mobility so as to make available to the majority of the members of a society the greatest quantity of goods and services in the most efficient and least costly way possible.

We are contemplating activities aimed at strengthening and reorganizing State apparatus, to which end we have been pursuing the following activities. We have institutionalized a public entity that is responsible for providing guidance in the process of modernizing Ecuador, called the National Council for State Modernization. Participants include representatives of the public, private and social sectors of the country. I should mention that we include within the public sector certain broad institutions of Ecuador's public administration — those entrusted with the task of modernizing what we call horizontal public-administration systems, such as the National Secretariat for Administrative Development.

We have been laying a legal foundation that will provide support and binding force to the processes of modernization in two areas: laws of general impact and laws of a specific impact. We have passed two laws of the former. First, the law on State modernization, privatization and provision of public services by the private sector established the scope, coverage and activities of these processes. Secondly, we passed a law on public-sector budgets, which lays down rules for co-responsibility and simplification in public finance. We are now working on two new sets of rules relating to the law on civil service, administrative careers and compensation, the purpose of which is to regulate the management of human capital in the public sector. We are also working on a law dealing with procurement, the purpose of which is to simplify procedures and paperwork for public contracts.

In more specific areas several laws have already been adopted, or exist in draft form, which seek to make viable specific processes of modernization in particular areas. Several advances have been achieved in modernizing the State, of which I shall highlight the following.

We have concluded the process of privatizing Ecuadorian Airlines, and we believe that it will soon be flying again.

We have adopted a law reforming the special law on telecommunications. It provides a legal foundation for promoting a true transformation of the telecommunications sector in Ecuador. In this context, we also contracted specialized consultancy services to plan the development and expansion of this sub-sector; the technological requirements for modernizing it; the economic and financial evaluation of the company that provides these services in Ecuador, known as EMETEL, and the development of a framework of legal regulations.

Before the end of the first quarter of 1996, we will conclude the public bidding for the concession of port services, and in the meantime a far-reaching administrative reorganization of the bodies responsible for port administration is being carried out. This reorganization has already yielded its first positive results, with a reduction of unnecessary personnel and the creation of management and investment-monitoring units.

We have introduced a set of measures aimed at modernizing customs administration, of which the following should be highlighted: procedures for granting concessions to private companies for random physical inspections and temporary storage of goods; the elimination of inspections of imports under special regimes; the elimination of tariff-setters and customer inspectors; the creation of automated databases for customs investigations and the comprehensive automation of our customs system through a satellite-communications system; and the professionalization of new customs officials.

In the sub-sector for roads, construction, maintenance and repair are being contracted out to private companies. The National Congress is currently considering the new law governing the electrical sub-sector, and the process of granting a concession for the construction and operation of the Toachi-Pilatón hydroelectric plant is now in its final stages.

The present Government has certainly been encountering powerful resistance to the modernization of the sub-sectors of public administration, born out of professional and trade union interests and lack of understanding of the challenges of the modern world. However, close to the end of the present Administration, perhaps the most important achievement is the increasing awareness of the need to modernize the public sector and create foundations for those processes. It will be up to the next Government to maintain these efforts and to capitalize on them.

The modernization of public administration, in its own context, is geared towards improving capacities for planning, guidance, management, control and evaluation of governmental activity. It therefore constitutes a cornerstone for increasing normative and operational capacities, whether or not these efforts are pursued under different political orientations.

At first sight these modernization activities may not have such a great impact as those in the other two contexts, but their maximum benefit is that they aim to provide a true capacity for response by the Government so that it may attend efficiently to the demands of society in increasingly globalized economies. However, to bring about a true modernization in forms of management, we felt it was important to apply an approach that would enable us in the first instance to focus on key areas of governmental action, and from there to spread modernization efforts towards other areas of activity.

These points have to do not with their economic, social or political importance, but, rather, with their general observance in public administration — that is, they constitute common factors in the various public sectors and institutions. Accordingly, under the auspices of the World Bank, with the Technical Assistance Project for Modernization of the State, known as Project MOSTA, the processes of change in public administration in Ecuador are oriented under so-called horizontal public administration systems, within keeping with Ecuador's administrative reality, five main areas of action.

The first covers public finance systems pertaining to improvement of taxation activities, budgetary and treasury matters, governmental accounting and public credit. Modernization of these systems is the responsibility of the Ministry of Finance.

The second area of action is in planning systems, with reference to development planning and public investment. Modernization of these systems falls to the General Planning Secretariat.

The National Secretariat for Administrative Development is responsible for the modernization of the third area of action: administration systems for human capital and institutional strengthening.

Fourthly, the systems for control of the use of public resources are the responsibility of the State Comptroller-General.

Lastly, automated information systems, which are required by the systems to which I have referred, fall to the Coordinating Unit of the SENDA — National Administration Secretariat — project.

In order to ensure harmony and compatibility of these various activities in different areas, the Coordinating Unit is located in the National Council for Modernization (CONAM), with the participation of coordinators from all of the public institutions I have mentioned, accountable directly to the senior officials of their institutions, coordinated and supervised by a well-defined technical coordinating unit established jointly by the authorities of CONAM and the World Bank.

Since the goals of the modernization of the public sector that we in Ecuador are pursuing are quite ambitious, we believe that our public institutions will become fully part of the modernization process, in order to be in tune with the times and with history, and in fulfilment of the natural law that in our Universe change and movement are the basis of the existence of all things.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

United Nations

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General Assembly
Fiftieth Session

Official Records

108th plenary meeting
Tuesday, 16 April 1996, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Diogo Freitas do Amaral .... (Portugal)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Kittikhoun (Lao People's Democratic Republic), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

Agenda item 120 (*continued*)

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations (A/50/888/Add.4)

The Acting President: I should like to draw the General Assembly's attention to document A/50/888/Add.4. In a letter contained in that document, the Secretary-General informs the President of the General Assembly that, since the issuance of his communications dated 28 February, 6 March and 3 and 11 April 1996, Vanuatu has made the necessary payment to reduce its arrears below the amount specified in Article 19 of the Charter.

May I take it that the General Assembly duly takes note of this information?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 12 *(continued)*

Report of the Economic and Social Council

Report of the Secretary-General (A/50/847)

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Group of Experts on Public Administration and Finance on its twelfth meeting (A/50/525)

Letter from the President of the Economic and Social Council to the President of the General Assembly (A/50/926)

Draft resolution (A/50/L.69)

The Acting President: This afternoon the Assembly will continue its plenary meetings devoted to public administration and development.

I call first on Mr. Wang Xuexian, representative of China.

Mr. Wang Xuexian (China) (*interpretation from Chinese*): It goes without saying that public administration plays an important role in the economic development of a State. This is especially so when the State is in the process of carrying out economic reforms and restructuring. Without dynamic macro-adjustment and regulation on the part of the Government, and without a highly efficient public administration, it will be difficult for any country to conduct economic activities in an orderly manner, and its efforts to realize sustained economic growth and sustainable development will be frustrated. It is therefore useful for States, in the framework of General Assembly resolution 49/136, to exchange information and experiences on public

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This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, *within one month of the date of the meeting*, to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, Room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

administration and development and to review United Nations activities in this area.

However, it is also necessary for us clearly to understand that public administration is in essence closely related to the tradition, culture and polity of the State concerned. A particular system of public administration is always shaped by the specific conditions of the State in question. The international community should respect the choices made by a country in consideration of its specific circumstances. The success or failure of public administration also has to be judged by the peoples of the countries concerned in the light of their specific conditions and needs. There is no universal model whose success can be guaranteed everywhere. Exchange of information among States is always helpful, but such an exchange must be conducted on the basis of non-interference in the internal affairs of others and respect for diversity in the field of public administration. It must not be used as a pretext for meddling in the internal affairs of other countries.

This should also be the basis on which the role of the United Nations in the area of public administration is to be considered. The United Nations role in this area has always been to facilitate exchanges of information and experience and to provide technical support for capacity-building. While it is useful to explore the opportunities for strengthening the United Nations role with regard to public administration, this does not mean that the general direction of United Nations activities in this area should be changed in any way, much less that the United Nations should now refocus its attention on working out a standard model for all States to emulate. At the same time, it should be emphasized that the strengthening of the United Nations activities in this area should not be achieved at the expense of its existing role in other areas. In particular, United Nations programmes and activities in the fields of economic and social development, environmental protection and other areas of special concern to the developing countries should not suffer negative consequences as a result.

The relevant reports under consideration also contain several recommendations concerning institutional arrangements in the area of public administration. We believe that we must proceed with caution on this matter. Several United Nations working groups are now in the process of considering the restructuring of the institutional arrangements of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields, including functional commissions, expert committees and their agendas. A basic consideration underlying this exercise is to avoid duplication and enhance efficiency. Past experience has clearly shown that establishing new institutional mechanisms is not the right way to proceed in strengthening the role of the United Nations. In fact, it flies in the face of the reform methods under way. Instead, we should focus our attention on existing mechanisms and try to work out ways to strengthen their resources and capacities so as to enable them better to perform their functions. This should be the basic starting point for our consideration of related institutional issues.

The Acting President: I now call on Mr. Pierre Atchi Atsin, Minister of Employment, the Civil Service and Social Security of Côte d'Ivoire.

Mr. Atchi Atsin (Côte d'Ivoire) (*interpretation from French*): Through me, Côte d'Ivoire welcomes the General Assembly's decision to take up, at the request of the African Civil Service Ministers who met in Tangiers on 20 and 21 June 1994, the question of public administration and development at its resumed fiftieth session.

In fact, the first initiative to increase awareness of the role of public administration in development came with the creation of the United Nations, among whose premises was the hallowed concept that the emergence of peaceful societies could be built only upon competent administration. There have been many recent attempts in this regard that have drawn on the results of recent meetings, all equally fruitful. But as Minister of Employment, the Civil Service and Social Security of Côte d'Ivoire, I will touch upon only those issues that I feel to be most significant in this respect.

The Pan-African Conference of Ministers of the Civil Service, held in Tangier, Morocco, on 20 and 21 June 1994, adopted the Tangier Declaration, which states that:

> "any sustainable economic and social development must be backed by an efficient, competent and responsible administration". *(A/49/495, annex, fourth paragraph)*

This Declaration shows us the need to invest in human resources as an essential factor in improving performance in the public sector.

The Ministers committed themselves to establishing policies to promoting an environment conducive to the emergence of public administrations that will serve development. The African Ministers also advocated the establishment of relations of complementarity and synergy between the public and private sectors.

In January this year the regional workshop held in Abidjan on public administration and administrative reform in the French-speaking African countries reaffirmed the importance and urgent need to establish a less cumbersome, more competent and better-paid civil service that does not obstruct a country's development.

More recently, in Namibia in March, over 50 delegations of African Governments considered ways and means to build an efficient and professional civil service for economic and social development. It is clear that the important role of public administration is well understood by the African Governments, since they hope that a world conference will be devoted to this subject.

From an early date, African countries recognized the close link between public administration and development. Indeed, lasting economic and social development requires rigorous planning, which can be done only by a competent public administration that can elaborate it the better to achieve certain desired development objectives. Achieving these broad objectives requires at the very least that our countries have administrations that truly understand development problems. But, more important even than having this capacity for understanding, administrations should be deeply rooted in the societies they have been created to serve. Hence, their success will depend on their level of integration and their ability to direct development at both the planning and implementation stages. In other words, to return to the reason we are meeting here today, economic and social development can be based only on a competent civil service integrated into a society managed by streamlined institutions with true public management capabilities.

The great changes that we have witnessed in recent years have shown us the extent of the tasks we face and how great is the need for change in order better to adapt public administration to the new context. Beyond piecemeal efforts, however, unanswered questions remain for each of our countries on how to establish criteria for streamlining, given the size of our administrations and our real needs. If we achieve this streamlining, we can avoid the excessive expenditure of financial resources that pointlessly increases spending in the public sector at the expense of the contributors.

In the search for this quantitative balance, we encounter the problem, on the one hand, and, of quality administration with competent human resources, on the other hand, of procedures for devolution and decentralization, both of which relate to the need to regionalize administrative activities. Since the State clearly cannot do everything, there is a need to create an interactive partnership between the civil service and the private sector, given the complexity of the tasks to be accomplished and the growing role of civil society, whose breadth and skills have now been recognized and are sought out.

Aware of this, the Government of Côte d'Ivoire, under the supreme authority of President Henri Konan-Bédié, is committed to several reforms with the following goals: providing personnel and salaried workers with tools better adapted to their training; unifying management and salary scales and reforming payment procedures for civil servants and other State employees; rationalizing procedures, methods and modes of management, simplifying and making them more flexible and ensuring the necessary decentralization of functions; preserving equity and justice within public administration; rigorously selecting and training State employees in order to strengthen administrative ethics and transparency; developing human resources by prioritizing the fields of health, education and employment — a special programme for human-resource development is currently under way in Côte d'Ivoire; strengthening institutional capacities by appropriately and efficiently providing the services necessary to their functions; implementing a national training plan for State employees; reforming the pay system, rewarding performance and making the necessary changes in the legal and judiciary institutions; and finally, establishing an ongoing dialogue with the private sector and other social partners.

In conclusion, I wish to state that any concerted development effort, be it bilateral or multilateral, depends on the administrative and institutional capacity of our States to manage resources rationally. But that capacity does not exist everywhere. Therefore, the international community and partners in development must provide on a priority basis particular support to our countries in establishing public administration that is responsive to modern management standards.

Success in the field of development depends primarily on sound public administration. The international community must be fully involved and committed if it truly wishes to help developing countries.

We fervently hope that this Assembly will be the place in which this awareness can flourish.

The Acting President: I call on Mr. Maris Gailis, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Environmental Protection and Regional Development of Latvia.

Mr. Gailis (Latvia): It is a great honour for me to address, on behalf of the Republic of Latvia, the General Assembly at its resumed fiftieth session on public administration and development. Throughout its existence, the United Nations has been the defender and promoter of the values of democratic society. The representatives of the 185 Member States of the Organization have been invited to examine the question of public administration and development, one of the cornerstones of democratic society. On this occasion, I should like to pay tribute to all the Governments and institutions that have demonstrated support for and solidarity with Latvia on its way towards a democratic society.

After the restoration of independence in 1991, Latvia faced the need to change its administration from a command system to a democratic one with balances of power and a service orientation. There was also a need to overhaul Latvia's legislative, judicial and executive institutions. The fifth Parliament of the Republic of Latvia, elected in the summer of 1993, and the parties of the coalition Government had the political will to take the path of change. Their goal was a modernized public sector able to manage a changed world and deal with the challenges arising as Latvia moves into Europe. The administrative systems of democratic European States were used as a model for reform.

The Government used the following methods to achieve its strategic objectives:

> the Ministry of State Reform was established as a focus for administrative change;
>
> political will was exhibited by the placement of a high-level politician at the head of the Ministry;
>
> a reform programme for public administration was drafted and approved at Cabinet level, based on the principles of the rule of law, fairness, openness, respect for the individual, accountability, efficiency and rationalism;
>
> a political-administrative division was established with the awareness that, in public service, there must be a capacity both to reflect the political wishes of the electorate and to ensure the continuity and sound management of State affairs regardless of changes in the political leadership;
>
> a neutral professional civil service is being created that will in the future ensure continuity and be able to serve any political party that comes to power;
>
> it has been recognized that the low wages and low prestige of the civil service, which affect the quality of the individuals attracted to the civil service, must be remedied;
>
> new legislation has been adopted to increase benefits, mandate education and professional training, increase the requirements and limitations on outside employment and address other activities incompatible with public service;
>
> a retraining programme for the entire civil service is focused on addressing the basic skills and knowledge of civil servants, including in economics, legal issues, communications and computers;
>
> the Government has focused on streamlining and improving lines of management and information within the public-service system in order to increase professionalism in decision-making and to create a system of accountability;
>
> dialogue has been established with non-governmental organizations, and efforts are being made to shift public sector functions to the private sector;
>
> a public-information campaign has been launched to link government with the citizen and to educate citizens on their rights and responsibilities in society;
>
> trust in government is being created through ethics programmes and freedom-of-information legislation.

Latvia has been involved in the construction of a new democratic society with a market-based economy for four and a half years, since the restoration of its independence in August 1991. The demolition of a command economy and the creation of the foundations of a free society has been a painful process. Economic and administrative transformation has been strongly influenced by the interplay of internal politics.

Among many urgent steps the country has taken on the road to democracy is the adoption of an administrative reform aimed at changing the structure of government, creating an effective civil service, democratizing the State and delegating State functions from the top to the bottom. The decision-making system of the Cabinet of Ministers has been improved through the inclusion of financial analysis, legal analysis and inputs from private sources. A new, functioning civil service system, with a broad nationwide retraining system for civil servants, was created; funding problems may yet jeopardize this system. An understanding of the need for a politically neutral civil service and a shift towards a service-oriented attitude in public service was accomplished. The distribution of public information on all policy changes was introduced.

There are, however, obstacles to change. Opinions and beliefs in society as a whole, and among civil servants in particular, have been slow to shift. A long-term effort and other trust-enhancing activities are necessary to educate politicians, civil servants and the public on the basic principles needed for viable administrative structures in a democratic system. The recent dissolution of the Government's focal point for administrative reform has left some efforts lacking in political will, resulting in some slowdown and backsliding. Attitudes left over from Soviet administrative practice hamper the implementation of changes — for example, the lack of success in adopting freedom-of-information and transparency legislation.

The orientation towards European integration will help speed the transformation of Latvia, in that it provides a clear direction for the reform process. The status of association with the European Union gives Latvia the advantage of access to expert advice and other technical assistance. Our multilateral and bilateral partners have made a valuable contribution to the development of a new Latvian society.

The Acting President: I call on Mr. Fausto Correia, Secretary of State for Public Administration of Portugal.

Mr. Correia (Portugal) (*spoke in Portuguese; interpretation from French text furnished by the delegation*): It is a great honour for me, as a Portuguese and member of the Government, to speak before the General Assembly at its fiftieth session and thus to be able to pay tribute to Mr. Freitas do Amaral, President of this United Nations forum, though he is not present today. My sincere and affectionate tribute goes out to this man of the law, an exemplary citizen, politician by vocation and internationally renowned jurist who has made unsurpassed contributions to Portugal and its public administration.

Aware of the world's social and economic problems, the thirteenth Constitutional Government, of which Mr. António Guterres is Prime Minister, has established a four-year programme characterized in essence by the highest quality democracy, a desire for equal opportunity for all, practical solidarity for the neediest and most suffering sectors, and particular priority given to the education and training of the Portuguese people.

Within the modern vision adopted by the Government, development is sustainable, regionally balanced and socially fair. The political challenge has become as clear as it is unavoidable. Thus it is necessary to stress employment, competitiveness and solidarity; to draw up a model within which the economy is a pillar of national dignity; and to promote a new relationship between the State and society through a series of institutional reforms that increase efficiency and reduce the size of State bureaucracy. Over the next four years, this political vision will have an important effect on the State reform process in general and on strategic activities to modernize and reform public administration.

The strategic factors of political policies necessarily involve a redefinition of the role of the State and public services in society.

We are all aware that in societies with scarce resources, which from time to time suffer economic crises of varying magnitude, the efficiency of public administration is doubly important, not only as the potential manager of the organizational and human capital at its disposal, but also as an engine of economic and social development.

Despite the diversity of administrative systems, traditions and experiences, the Portuguese civil service is based on a legal, institutional and regulatory framework open to citizen participation and the recognition of the broadest rights of citizenship, which makes relations between the public and private sectors of the economy harmonious and profitable.

The strategic objectives of the Portuguese civil service, assigned to it by the programme of the thirteenth Government, are essentially based on a model, a goal and a means.

The model is that of a democratic and participatory public administration independent of parties and the State. This administration cultivates the values of transparency and accessibility and mechanisms of dialogue and social cooperation.

The goal is that of promoting the country's harmonious development, accelerating development at the social, cultural and economic levels and meeting the needs of citizens in general and economic agents in particular by increasing the effectiveness and reducing the size of the State bureaucracy.

The means is provided by an effective, efficient and high-quality public service made up of professional, highly qualified officials.

In the years to come, these strategic objectives will have a varied effect on the modernization of public administration, whatever the dimension of the State involved, whether the State of power, characterized in essence by the exercise of the powers of authority and by the protection and pursuit of the general interest; the ethical State, which guarantees respect for society's fundamental values, fights the abuse of power and strengthens the prestige and neutrality of public functions; the strategic State, aimed at defining the objectives, priorities and ultimate ends of political action; the State as servant — that is, the political community organized with the aim of providing tangible services and utilities to the citizenry; or, lastly, the technical State, which organizes the means, technology and information for supporting the State in its other dimensions.

In ensuring that all these dimensions fall to the State, the aim is not to eliminate any of them, but rather, through them, to seek a place for the State — in other words, for public administration. We must consider the following options: regionalization, achieved through the creation of administrative regions based on the principles of subsidiary relations and partnership by involving public and private entities in the modernization effort; public administration reform, aimed at strengthening the citizenry in its relationship to the State in order to broaden the democratic and participatory model without bureaucracy and independent of parties and the State; the basic role of public services as purveyor of improved governmental action; and public action based on the principle of trust in the citizen, cooperation with social and union forces and the qualification, dignity, motivation and professionalism of human resources.

Here, while never forgetting the complementarity of the State's dimensions, we must stress four aspects that I deem essential as basic guidelines of public administration: the inclusion and complementarity of the private sector, in the perspective of the privatization of public services — or, in other words, in the perspective of non-interference by the State; the strengthening of the fundamental rights of citizens *vis-à-vis* the public administration; the quest for ongoing concertation with our social partners; and cooperation and shared experiences.

As to the question of the privatization of public services, it must be said that the Constitution of the Portuguese Republic has certain characteristics tending towards exclusive State intervention in various areas, such as health, education and social security. This model clearly flows from the ideas that heavily influenced the constitutional lawmakers following the revolution of 25 April 1974. But none of this necessarily leads to the temptation for the State to do everything — nor is that the Government's political orientation — by assuming a genuinely monopolistic attitude towards the satisfaction of collective requirements that leaves no room for private initiative.

On the other hand, if such criteria as the benefits of competitiveness and the subsequent improvement of services rendered, not to mention the need to limit the State budget deficit, tend to help the State to avoid being a material provider of services by leaving the satisfaction of these collective needs to an energized society, it is equally true that the State, at least in its dimension as State of power, enjoys the prerogatives of authority and the ability to impose burdens and restrictions on citizens, which makes any attempt at privatization a somewhat sensitive one.

It would therefore seem clear that the State can usefully allow certain areas of its traditional activity to be taken over by social initiative, while reserving for itself the role of ultimate guarantor of the collective necessities to be satisfied by the private sector. The flip side of this idea is necessarily that the State, by exercising the powers of authority, retains those areas in which it acts in its capacity as power, since it would be difficult for the State to transfer or abjure prerogatives that are inherent to it.

The second important aspect concerns the strengthening of the citizen's rights *vis-à-vis* public administration, which can be translated into two words:

participation and information. Indeed, it is through these two paths, which have become fundamental rights of citizens, that the Portuguese public administration stresses the mechanisms of democratic participation in the development of its activities and, at the same time, opens itself to society and the citizenry so as to provide, on a concrete, daily basis, access to knowledge of its work in an environment of transparency and equality before the law.

The quest for concertation with its social partners is a new way of managing the Portuguese public administration, favouring dialogue and joint action with workers' representatives as a form of commitment and involving all interested parties in the process of modernization.

This year, the Government to which I belong celebrated a historic agreement with all the unions representing public employees. The agreement constitutes the beginning of a weighty negotiation process, from which profound changes are expected to emerge in the Portuguese civil service. It is a fundamental commitment assumed by Mr. Jorge Coelho, Assistant Minister to the Prime Minister, whom I have the honour to represent here.

I wish now briefly to stress the importance of cooperation with other peoples. Cooperation and the sharing of experience with other peoples and other administrations, particularly with countries whose official language is Portuguese, are central elements of Portuguese public administration. Thanks to its contacts with different social and cultural realities and with the administrative experiences and traditions that belong to these peoples' heritage, Portugal continues to regard cooperation and the exchange of information and experience as important avenues for its own modernization.

In this respect, the Portuguese public administration is and will always remain open to cooperation, within the scope of its abilities, and to encourage exchanges in order to broaden its modernization effort and thus to contribute to the improvement of its own administration.

Administrative change and improvement, with the citizen as their fixed reference point, allow Governments, in an equitable manner and within the comity of nations, to aspire to the highest quality of democracy, which promotes equal opportunity and solidarity with the neediest and most suffering among us.

The Acting President: I now call on Mr. Vasyl Rogovy, First Deputy Prime Minister of the Economy of Ukraine.

Mr. Rogovy (Ukraine) (*interpretation from Russian*): The delegation of Ukraine wishes to thank Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali for his report on public administration and development and to comment on the practical achievements and recommendations contained therein.

The international dialogue taking place here stresses the need to strengthen our public administration institutions. The development of international cooperation in this important area has particular significance for developing countries and those with economies in transition. As it transforms its socio-economic system, Ukraine is seeking effective ways to modernize its public administration and to adapt it to contemporary conditions.

Thanks to a new course of reform proclaimed by Ukrainian President Kuchma, the Government is moving towards a fundamentally market-based, socially-oriented economy. In the near future, Ukraine will be adopting a new constitution to ensure a legitimate basis for a new, constructive stage in the development of the State, creating stable political conditions for further reform in our public administration functions to promote development.

Public administration in Ukraine seeks to change economic development models; complete the elimination of the old system of centralized resource distribution and the command-based management of our economy; create a viable private sector and develop its effective activities; ensure social support for the process of transition to the market; and ensure sustainable development in harmony with the environment.

The fundamental direction of governmental adjustment aims at liberalization of the economy, radically narrowing the administrative scope for intervention by State bodies in the activities of the economic actors; the process of price control; the establishment of economic ties; macroeconomic stabilization aimed at suppressing inflation; and the increased effectiveness of structural economic reconstruction.

These administrative efforts on the part of the State in this situation seek to ensure comprehensive structural changes in the economic and social spheres. Their goal is to reorient the economy of the country towards a more effective utilization of resources, thus enhancing export potential and creating new jobs.

The main provisions of our national programme of structural reconstruction envision a modernization of our scientific-technical and technological potential and conditions conducive to its development; overcoming the energy crisis and cutting down on the resources used for production; restructuring and privatizing the largest State enterprises or closing ineffective ones; converting and diversifying the military-industrial enterprises; and alleviating the social consequences of industrial modernization.

One peculiarity of the initial stage of structural reform lies in the fact that it is unfolding in conditions of limited domestic and foreign investment resources and the inadequate development of financial institutions. In this regard, Ukraine is extremely interested in the support of the international community in elaborating plans to restructure business and creating investment projects and investment mechanisms for their study and implementation.

The restructuring and reform of the economy and the need for greater development potential require substantial changes in the investment and financial credit policy of the State. The State will stimulate the joint investment of State and private-sector capital in investment projects. Legal regulation of insurance risks in investment activities is being put in place.

Concrete steps have been taken to attract foreign investments to the Ukrainian economy. The State sector of the economy, despite the increased privatization of industry, growing job opportunities and the availability of fixed capital, still plays an important role in building infrastructure and the economy as a whole.

Reform is being planned in the State sector of the economy for the near future. The few industrial enterprises that involve national security interests will remain in government hands. The State's interests will also be maintained through the participation of its representatives in the work of oversight committees. Designated officials will be mandated to oversee State activities involving joint-stock companies.

A key problem is the privatization of State enterprises and ensuring their effective work, particularly in the first post-privatization period. For this, what is needed are normative legal measures of an informational nature and, most importantly, a change in the psychological climate.

People who have lived most of their lives under a command administrative system and total State control generally tend to lose the sense of empowerment and confidence that hard work and qualifications will lead to success. The State does not have enough professional leaders able to assess the rapidly changing environment in the domestic and foreign markets.

Our President has approved a programme to ensure experienced workers for State service and another to work with the leaders of State enterprises, organizations and institutions. The President has opened the Ukrainian Academy for Public Administration and an institute for improving qualifications.

The human factor is our reference point, on which effective transformation and the pace of development greatly depend. It is the cornerstone of administrative reform, allowing public administration to fulfil its potential and attracting a new generation into public service. Of particular importance to effective public administration is the development of media and telecommunications systems allowing the broad dissemination of information. Necessary and appropriate information is crucial for timely administrative decisions. We would be happy to receive support in working out a strategy for managing our information flows.

In summary, we can say that the political and economic situation in Ukraine at the present time is such that resolving the question of restructuring the functions of the public administration apparatus is a key factor for profound reform in all areas of our society. In this connection, it is hard to overstate the importance of international cooperation in the establishment of an effective public administration mechanism for stabilizing the economic situation and ensuring strong economic growth.

Ukraine is making a great contribution to this development. In particular, with the help of the United Nations Development Programme, a regional seminar will be held next week in our capital on administration, participation and democracy. Our Government believes that practical results will emerge from this measure. We feel that concentrated efforts on consultative services and technical assistance in creating groups on questions of public administration reform and information exchange on this question should be made under United Nations auspices within existing structures. We would particularly be interested in intensifying the coordinating role of the Economic and Social Council in this important area.

In this context, our delegation supports the European Union's proposal that questions relating to public administration could be considered at one of the next substantive sessions of the Economic and Social Council. We expect that the United Nations and other international organizations will play a greater role in offering assistance in the elaboration and implementation of strategies for public administration, including in the Governments of countries with transition economies.

The Acting President: I call on the Permanent Representative of Bahrain.

Mr. Buallay (Bahrain) (*interpretation from Arabic*): Since this is the first time that I have addressed the Assembly, I should like, on behalf of my delegation, to congratulate you, Sir, on chairing this meeting. I am sure that your experience will enrich our proceedings.

The role of public administration has become very important in driving progress and development as well as in helping peoples achieve sustainable development in the socio-economic and other spheres. Public administration is the force that will propel society towards progress and prosperity through socio-economic reforms, when conditions are propitious and enough resources are available to support it and to develop the abilities of those who are to implement these reforms.

Bahrain has paid particular attention to developing and improving public administration. Since our independence in 1971, the Government has expanded the work of the Departments of State. Convinced of the importance of public administration, the Government has assigned responsibility for its supervision to the Minister of State for the Council of Ministers.

The Council of Civil Service was established in 1982 as a mechanism for supervising the status of the civil service and the development of other Departments of State. Among the Council's most important tasks are: to study policies relating to the recruitment and status of State employees; to evaluate information on remuneration and compensation; to study programmes on the production and effectiveness of the State workforce; to compare and contrast recruitment and employment policies; and to establish direct relationships between Departments of State and other agencies.

Governments play an important role in creating successful public administrations that can help society to achieve lasting social and economic progress. To this end, they must lay the necessary legal foundations, establish regulations and develop administrative ideas and supervisory abilities leading to efficient analysis, planning and evaluation. Governments must also ensure the participation of all in the renaissance of their societies.

The role of women in public administration cannot be over-emphasized, particularly in the area of decision-making. The participation of women in public administration is one of the key elements in achieving a balance between the role of men and women in planning a successful public administration that will serve society. In this context, I should like to note that the State of Bahrain encourages the participation of women in public administration in order to ensure equality between the sexes and in order for women to play their full role in State agencies.

Developing countries that are working to enhance the performance of their public administrations face very difficult circumstances due to the scarcity of their resources. In this respect, we feel that the developed States can play an important role in helping these countries create better public administrations capable of supporting their economic and social development. The developed States can do this by providing financial assistance, experience, training sessions and the necessary technology to train, qualify and improve the efficiency of personnel in order to develop the indigenous capacities of the developing countries.

Developing countries, for their part, should work to create an atmosphere conducive to developing their national capacity, so that they can make full use of the assistance they receive from the developed countries to help their societies achieve sustainable development.

Public administrations in the developing and developed countries are constantly subject to review through research in this area, which can help them to perform better. We should not worry about this improvement, thinking that it will take place at the expense of certain employees, who would lose their jobs because of technological innovations or modernization. Other jobs are available for them, and in any case a balance should be achieved between people and machines. Modernization should not lead to dispensing with the services of certain employers. Technology should help human beings, not cause them more misery.

Another phenomenon that I should mention here is lack of control in public administration. This occurs in both developed and developing countries, but is more prominent in the latter. Public administration can be a refuge — a way of making a living without paying much attention to efficiency or performance, particularly when the State is responsible for everything in the absence of the private sector. Here public administration is bloated and accountability is non-existent, particularly if the administration is massive. In this case we can only think about the resources that the country is wasting. These resources could be invested in projects that would be very beneficial to its citizens. Developing countries are trying to improve their performance in this area with a view to a more positive outcome and to the elimination of negative factors.

The United Nations has a primary role in maintaining international peace and security as well as in other vital areas, particularly sustainable development. In this context, developing countries view as important the role played by the United Nations as an effective instrument in enhancing the efficiency of public administration in these countries. The United Nations should help developing countries improve their public administration and achieve sustainable development through the following steps: by sharing experience and providing financial support; by contributing to the financial assistance offered by countries to develop the private sector; by supporting the efforts of Governments in developing their public administrations through providing experience and technology to developing countries; by urging the specialized agencies to provide experience and consultative services, and to assist in economic and social research; and by helping in the planning of economic and social programmes and in their implementation.

In conclusion, the United Nations, in extending its consultative services and assistance to the developing countries, should take into consideration the disparity in their socio-economic development patterns and in the various stages of their public administration systems.

The President: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Zola Skweyiya, Minister for the Public Service and Administration of South Africa.

Mr. Skweyiya (South Africa): The winds of democratization currently blowing throughout the four corners of the world, not only give a glimmer of hope to the peoples of the world, but also pose daunting challenges to the Governments concerned.

We are pleased to note that the Secretary-General's report goes to the heart of these challenges. We enthusiastically welcome the recommendations in the report and wish to congratulate the Secretary-General on a job well done. We believe that public service, as an executive arm of government, should be one of the effective instruments by means of which government should intervene in order to achieve sustainable development in society. It was in realization of this that the Pan-African Conference adopted the Tangier Declaration in Morocco in 1994. Indeed, it is for this reason that we consider this fiftieth resumed session an important forum for the enhancement of the understanding of public administration in the development process.

May we also state at the outset that we regard the resumed session not just as an opportunity to share with others — and in so doing, hopefully, to provide motivation, insight and understanding to those engaged in similar activities — but also as a means of increasing our knowledge and heightening our awareness on matters that may, over time, prove critical to the success of our initiatives.

In South Africa we have achieved much in a relatively short time, particularly through the establishment of a stable democracy, the extension of democracy to large parts of local government, the ending of discrimination in Government programmes and improving services to the underprivileged majority of South Africans, improving the economy of the country, and by instilling a new patriotism that promotes national reconciliation and reconstruction.

Upon assuming office, the new Government was confronted with the colossal task of restructuring and reforming an inherited apartheid public service characterized by a lack of representativeness, legitimacy, service delivery, accountability and transparency; centralized control and top-down management; an absence of effective management information; low productivity; adversarial labour relations; and a lack of professional work ethics.

Before the coming into operation of the 1993 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act, after our country's first truly democratic elections, on 27 April 1994, South Africa was effectively divided into 11 separate geographical entities, each with its own constitution, legislation and administrative system. The public services of these former entities consisted of 176 departments, with a total personnel complement of roughly 1.25 million people. The various public services differed in numerous respects, because the autonomous nature of the 11 former constitutional entities enabled each of them to develop according to its particular needs, preferences and circumstances, without taking national interests into account.

However, the Constitution's requirement of, *inter alia,* a single, streamlined, efficient and transparent public service necessitated the amalgamation of the 11 former public services into a single, unified public service governed by uniform laws, policies and other prescripts; the reallocation or reassignment of the administration of more than 1,000 laws; and the reallocation of resources to institutions that have new functional and geographic jurisdictions and new priorities.

Although the rationalization process has not yet been fully completed, the most important actions, such as organizational rationalization, have for the most part been finalized, and others will continue to be pursued vigorously, with the object of achieving full transformation within the shortest practicable time-frame.

The physical rationalization of the public service into a unified body to perform its administrative functions has also largely been completed. However, much needs to be done in transforming the functioning, mind-set and ethos of the public service in order to achieve an efficient and effective agency for service delivery, as required by our Government's reconstruction and development programme.

While it has been recognized that a comprehensive transformation of the public service is required, it is vital that such a transformation process be guided by a clear vision. This vision for the public service has been identified as one that continuously seeks to improve the lives of the people of South Africa.

In pursuit of this vision, the Government sees as its mission the creation of a people-centred and people-driven public service that is characterized by equity, quality, timeliness and a strong code of ethics.

The strategic framework for change that is therefore pursued, in addition to the rationalization imperatives already referred to, entails the following.

A leaner and more cost-effective public service is to be created by means of right-sizing, adjusting remuneration structures, early retirement, natural attrition, contracting out services through partnerships where the need can be justified and redeployment and retraining.

Institution-building and management improvement are to be carried out with the objective of empowering and motivating managers to be leaders, and individual public servants to work productively and with initiative. The strategies to be followed are the devolution of managerial responsibility and accountability; the introduction of new and more participatory organizational structures; human-resource development; and the introduction of management-information systems.

Representativeness and affirmative action are to be accomplished by outlawing discrimination; reforming recruitment, selection, employment and promotion practices; utilizing time-frames; proclaiming legislation that will be designed to ensure its active and correct implementation; and inculcating attitudinal changes.

Public-service delivery is to be transformed by making it more effective in order to meet the basic needs of the majority of the population, especially those of the large number who live below the poverty line. Key departments such as health, education and welfare are already addressing certain major social problems.

Accountability and transparency are to be enhanced by ensuring that built-in mechanisms for regulating internal accountability are established in every Government department and provincial administration, which promotes a participatory approach to decision-making. External accountability will also be ensured by promoting public participation in influencing and evaluating policy, both indirectly, through elected parliamentary representatives and statutory agencies, and directly, through the Public Sector Forum.

As concerns employment conditions and labour relations, pay and employment conditions will be improved by means of adequate minimum wages, equal pay for equal work, reduction in differentials, the development of appropriate career paths, a reduction in the number of grades and improved conditions for women and people with disabilities. As regards labour relations, emphasis will be put on a move towards a more consensual and less confrontational model of collective bargaining and on effective negotiating structures and practices, in order to minimize the possible disruption of public services by labour unrest. Even on matters previously regarded as so-called management prerogatives, the move is towards co-determination and consultation with a wide variety of stakeholders.

A professional service ethos is to be promoted to encourage a highly motivated public service with strong morale and a sense of mission, by utilizing a code of conduct and a systematic programme to prevent corruption.

In human resource development and training, it is recognized that the effective mobilization, development and utilization of human-resource capacity will be critical for the success of institution-building and management programmes, as well as for the success of the transformation process more generally.

The challenge to transform the public service and to deliver high-quality services in the new South Africa is being experienced at all levels. No longer will the old, traditional bureaucratic approaches that applied in the apartheid public service hold sway. We are determined to get members of the public service to focus on customer care and service delivery and to remember that they are servants, and not masters, of the public. Managing the change has been a daunting challenge, and we have tried our best to foster a collective responsibility to drive the transformation.

May I take this opportunity to thank, first of all, the international community in general for the assistance it gave us, the South Africans as a whole, in our struggle against apartheid, but more importantly, those countries that are helping us in this process of transforming the South African public service. We hope that we will be able to work with the international community in changing and entrenching democracy within South Africa, specifically through the democratization and reform of our public service.

The Acting President: I call on His Excellency The Honourable Chief Ayo Ogunlade, Minister of National Planning of Nigeria.

Chief Ogunlade (Nigeria): The Nigerian delegation welcomes the opportunity to participate in the debate on the question of public administration and development at this resumed session of the Assembly, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 49/136 of 19 December 1994. In this context, we wish to express our appreciation to the Secretary-General for his report contained in document A/50/847 of 8 March 1996.

Similarly, we wish to congratulate the Group of Experts on Public Administration and Finance for their report. We consider the two reports not only timely but also substantive contributions to the debate.

At the outset, it is my delegation's considered view that the primary responsibility for reforming or improving the public sector rests with national Governments. Consequently, the whole question of public administration and development must be country-specific and must be seen in the context of local conditions and history. None the less, we recognize that in recent years global development strategies and initiatives have been influenced by factors that include demand for increased participation by the population in governance, increased economic interdependence and emphasis on social justice.

It is becoming increasingly clear that many countries face the obligation of seeking to redefine the role of government in the pursuit of national development and sustained economic growth. Among the challenges are the questions of efficiency, effectiveness and responsiveness of government. In Africa, where the private sector is virtually non-existent or ill-defined, Governments have recognized the need to strengthen the public sector through institutional restructuring, including civil-service reforms and capacity-building.

Nigeria in the 1980s embarked on civil-service reforms. Our Head of State, in his 1996 budget statement, stressed the need to undertake reforms in the Nigerian civil service as an approach to enhanced performance, efficiency and accountability within the public sector. The net effect of this endeavour has been the establishment of a manageable civil service with an inbuilt mechanism for training and capacity-building. Resulting from this has been the continuing desire to create an enabling environment for the private sector to derive impulse and orientation from the public sector, so that, in turn, both can serve complementary roles. In the process, our new national investment policy allows foreign investors to participate in the Nigerian economy, assured of an enabling environment facilitated by the introduction of the requisite fiscal and macro-economic measures.

For most developing countries, technical assistance represents a development resource additional to national resources and capacity. In this connection, it is appropriate to recall that General Assembly resolution 44/211 of December 1989 enjoins nationals of countries to design, formulate, implement and monitor technical-assistance programmes. The point that is being made here, therefore, is that States receiving technical assistance should not be relieved of the obligation and the responsibility to determine their development programmes, even with external assistance. We believe, therefore, that donor countries have an obligation to refrain from seeking to impose their conditionalities and methods of programme identification and implementation on developing countries.

Beginning with the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June 1992; the World Conference on Human Rights, in Vienna in 1993; the Cairo International Conference on Population and Development, in September 1994; the World Summit for Social Development, held in 1995 in Copenhagen; and the Fourth World Conference on Women, in Beijing in September 1995, the issue of development has come to the forefront as the most important challenge facing the human race. National Governments and, indeed, the international community must find ways and means to eliminate poverty, promote social justice, protect the environment and promote good governance. In this connection, Nigeria welcomes and supports the work of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group of the General Assembly on an Agenda for Development.

In the same vein, we share the vision expressed by the Secretary-General, in an Agenda for Peace, that there can be no development without a peaceful environment. It is for this reason that the Nigerian Government has taken the necessary steps to put in place institutions and mechanisms that are home-grown in support of the democratic process, in order to create an enabling environment for the promotion of people-centred development.

In conclusion, the Nigerian delegation hopes that the Member States of this world Organization will see their way clear to revitalize their roles and provide assistance, as necessary, to national Governments in the area of public administration and development.

The Acting President: I call on His Excellency Mr. A. H. N. Shabangu, Minister for Labour and Public Service of Swaziland.

Mr. Shabangu (Swaziland): Allow me at the outset, on behalf of my delegation, to express our warm congratulations to Mr. Diogo Freitas do Amaral his election as President of this body. We are confident that his rich wisdom and long experience will benefit this session in the realization of its noble goals. To this end I pledge the full support and cooperation of my delegation. We would also like to pay tribute to his predecessor for a very successful presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session.

I feel greatly honoured to be given this opportunity to highlight for this body issues relating to public administration and development management in the Kingdom of Swaziland.

The Kingdom of Swaziland, being a developing country, has to cope with internal factors, such as the increasing demand for services, as well as external factors, such as the changing political climate in southern Africa. The regional and world recessions have also had an adverse impact on the performance of our economy.

Recognizing the increasingly competitive environment, in which it is becoming harder and harder to secure development financing, and realizing also that there is a growing national budget deficit, the Kingdom of Swaziland has embarked on the formulation of a National Development Strategy, which is spearheaded by the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development. This strategy is aimed at setting and directing Swaziland's development options for the coming 20 to 30 years.

May I briefly reflect on the specific objectives of the National Development Strategy in Swaziland, which are as follows: first, to explore the options for economic and social development in Swaziland, taking into account the expected macroeconomic situation, the need to balance competing priorities and likely resource constraints, and the key role played by the private sector in Swaziland's economy; secondly, to assess the impact of the different options on Government revenue, expenditures and manpower requirements; thirdly, to determine an appropriate role for the public sector — including public enterprises — both for cross- sectoral issues and within each sector, clearly delineating its responsibilities for direct action, regulation and facilitation; and, fourthly, to propose a framework of policy measures and public-investment criteria for each of the main sectors of the economy.

To complement the National Development Strategy, the Swaziland Government inaugurated an internally driven adjustment programme, called the Public Sector Management Programme, in June 1995. This programme aims to determine an appropriate role for the public sector in the country's pursuit of economic growth and development.

The main objectives of this programme include the following: first, to ensure that public expenditure is properly targeted at national development objectives; second, to ensure that public expenditure achieves the set objectives in an efficient manner; third, to ensure that the aggregate level of recurrent expenditure is sustainable in view of expected recurrent revenues; fourth, to ensure that tax levels do not increase to disincentive rates; fifth, to ensure that the taxation structure provides adequate incentives to investors; sixth, to streamline the structure, organization and operations of the public service to ensure value for money; and, seventh, to significantly increase the productivity and efficiency of the public service through institutional strengthening and capacity-building.

The Public Sector Management Programme is coordinated by the Ministry of Labour and Public Service, as the Ministry responsible for public-service management. It is to be headed by the National Director, to whom all the Ministerial teams report. The Minister for Labour and Public Service reports all matters pertaining to the programme to the Cabinet through a Cabinet subcommittee. This is intended to ensure that there is enough political commitment at the highest level of Government and thus to secure the necessary political will to drive the programme. This programme is at a stage of implementation at which Government structures are conducting an introspection exercise to see how the realization of its objectives can be facilitated.

I am persuaded to indicate that in recognition of the increasing demand for participation and transparency in both the National Development Strategy and the Public Sector Management Programme, all the stakeholders are directly involved. The public service, with its two workers' organizations — the Swaziland National Association of Civil Servants and the Swaziland National Association of Teachers — are active participants in deciding the future of Swaziland. The same is true of the two workers' federations in the private sector, represented by the Swaziland Federation of Labour and the Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions. Employers' organizations, such as the Federation of Swaziland Employers and the Chambers of Commerce and Industry, are also major contributors to these efforts.

Swaziland, like all developing countries, is experiencing growing unemployment, which presents difficult challenges to all those whose preoccupation is to achieve sustained economic growth and sustainable development by facilitating and creating a conducive environment for good public administration and effective development management.

Swaziland hopes that with these initiatives, centred on the National Development Strategy and the Public Sector Management Programme, the topical issues that it has identified concerning public administration and development management will be addressed.

We would be remiss if we did not express our deep appreciation to His Excellency the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for his excellent report presented to us in document A/50/847 and its annexes. In reviewing the report of the Secretary-General, I was encouraged to note the recommendations for national Governments on public administration and development and the United Nations response to these recommendations. I wish to confirm that, although His Majesty's Government has initiated actions in some of the areas identified in the report, we will continue to appeal to the United Nations for assistance in areas such as development of policy, strategic plans and performance improvement indicators; effective investment in human resources through focusing on upgrading the capacity of national training institutions; assessment of privatization policies; and providing an enabling environment for economic development.

May I place on record Swaziland's concurrence with the recommendations pertaining to the role of the United Nations organs in coordinating public administration and development. My delegation reaffirms that the recommendations on the revitalization of the role of the United Nations as a clearing-house, the translation of the goals and recommendations of global conferences into detailed programmes of implementation, the development of a healthy private sector, the development of technical and analytical skills, and assistance in all phases of the restoration and restructuring of public administration institutions form a firm basis for our future cooperation with the United Nations.

In conclusion, my delegation supports all efforts to improve public administration and development and will fully cooperate with other delegations in ensuring that they are fully considered and, where appropriate, adopted.

The Acting President: I now call on Her Excellency Ms. Raquel Hernández, First Deputy Minister, Ministry of Finance and Prices, of Cuba.

Ms. Hernández Herrera (Cuba) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: The impact of recent international developments and the new challenges that the international economy must face leave no doubt as to the need for competent public administration in order to achieve sustainable development. Nor is there any doubt that the United Nations, with its programme in public administration and finance, can support national Governments in their objective: more effective and efficient systems.

My country wishes to contribute to the achievement of the Assembly's objectives by presenting its own experiences in the area of public administration and development.

The disappearance of the European socialist bloc and the tightening of the economic blockade that, has been imposed on Cuba by the United States for more than 30 years were the main factors pushing the Cuban economy into one of the deepest crises in its history, in particularly changing and adverse circumstances. The decline in gross domestic product of almost 35 per cent between 1989 and 1993 was due to the lack of access to medium- and long-term financing resources, the drastic reduction of import capacity by 75 per cent, the loss of traditional international markets — since trade with the socialist bloc accounted for 85 per cent of our foreign trade — and the deterioration of exchange rates, stemming primarily from a drop of almost 35 per cent in the export price of sugar.

The Government of the Republic of Cuba decided that in order to deal with the impact of the crisis it was necessary to activate a programme of reforms that would allow the economy to recover, preserve the achievements obtained in the fields of health, education, social security and welfare, distribute as equitably as possible the inevitable social costs and, at the same time, create the necessary conditions to reinsert the country into the world economy.

The Government's leadership, and its commitment to change, transparent implementation and the participation of all socio-economic sectors in the planning and implementation of our programmes have been essential aspects of the reform process undertaken by the Cuban public administration.

Social policy, which provides for free education and health care for the entire population, regardless of income level, race, religion or political ideology, has been at the centre of the Government's strategy. In spite of its economic difficulties, Cuba has devoted to those activities the resources necessary for the maintenance of this policy, and has not closed down schools, hospitals, senior-citizen homes or day-care centres during all these years of economic difficulty.

Comprehensiveness in the Cuban social security system is another major tenet of public administration in the area of social policy.

Between 1989 and 1993, years of profound economic crisis, the part of the State budget for social security services increased by 33 per cent, and by 1993 10 per cent of the gross domestic product went towards ensuring that not one citizen failed to collect his retirement benefits on time, and that all those who, having reached the stipulated retirement age, voluntarily requested retirement would have the same right and access to benefits.

The results of the social policy we have maintained can be seen in such achievements as our infant mortality rate of 9.9 per 1,000 live births and a life expectancy at birth of 74.7 years. These figures are comparable to those of the most developed countries of the world.

As regards employment programmes, the Cuban public administration has tried to combine the necessary streamlining of the labour force with the development of other, alternative sources of income, primarily by increasing non-State activities and developing new branches of the economy. The State provides a temporary allowance to persons who do not succeed in being reabsorbed into the new sectors. At the same time, enterprises have been induced to carry out the economic adjustment process gradually, thus avoiding massive lay-offs.

One of the main structural changes promoted by reform in Cuba is the increased participation of the non-State sector in the economy. The most important change has occurred in the agricultural sector: more than 42 per cent of the arable land owned by the State was handed over to cooperatives, families and individuals. The non-State sector now holds 67.3 per cent of all land, as compared to the 24.8 per cent it previously held, and 70 per cent of all workers in the agricultural labour force work in the non-State sector.

Self-employment grew to more than 200,000 persons, more than 15 times the number before these changes took place. This process of change was reinforced by the establishment of markets for agricultural products and industrial goods, where producers can sell their merchandise at free market prices.

The opening up to foreign investment has also supported the structural changes in the economy. Our foreign-investment law number 77, adopted in 1995, opened almost all branches of the economy to foreign investment and authorized up to 100 per cent of foreign capital in investments. At the end of 1995 there were 230 economic partnership projects involving foreign capital, with an investment commitment of $2.1 billion. Foreign investment is already considerable in the industries of tourism, mining — mostly nickel — oil and telecommunications.

The essential factor in the changes to the production framework has been the Cuban public administration's mobilization of domestic resources towards investment projects that generate growth in marketable services and that have a significant impact on exports and on the replacement of imports. This has allowed for the development of new branches of the economy such as tourism, biotechnology and the pharmaceutical industry.

The Cuban public administration has also invested large amounts of resources in infrastructure projects, such as those in the areas of transportation, energy, telecommunications, water and sanitation, while regarding provision of primary services to society, combined with technological potential, as the basic premise for social development and the efficiency of the public sector.

The decentralization of foreign trade and the elimination of State monopolies have been of vital importance in the process of integrating the Cuban economy into the international marketplace. More than 250 entities — compared to 50 previously — have the necessary legal capacity to carry out operations of this nature. Foreign businesses represented in the country rose to more than 660 by the end of 1995, and at present relations are maintained with over 2,500 firms from some 100 countries.

The circulation of freely convertible hard currency in the domestic market was permitted in order to take advantage of the potential of the growing financial resources generated by the development of the tourism sector, of the increasing number of foreign firms with offices in our country and of the Cuban community abroad. The circulation of two forms of hard currency favoured the entry of foreign currency into the country, to the benefit of the financial management of Cuban public administration.

In December 1994 the National Bank of Cuba issued the convertible Cuban peso, valued at one United States dollar, in order to re-establish progressively the role played by the national currency. In 1995, in support of this objective, we officially authorized the establishment of a network of money-exchange offices whose rates are in accordance with those dictated by the informal economy.

In the financial sector, banking activity in Cuba has begun a restructuring process that involves segregating the functions of the central bank from those of the commercial bank, and establishing a new banking system that can respond to present economic requirements. Ten foreign banks have already opened their offices in Cuba.

The insurance sector is undergoing an accelerated process of modernization in order to satisfy the demands of a market that is radically different from the one that existed before reform.

The number of trading companies acting as financial mediators, either in association with entrepreneurial groups or as independent entities, is also on the rise. All this contributes to the integration of the business network of a national financial system.

While increasing the efficiency of financial management, the Cuban public administration has had to re-establish domestic financial equilibrium and ensure an adequate balance between development costs and fixed costs.

As a result of the crisis, in 1993 the Cuban economy reached the point of dangerous imbalance in internal finances. After long public consultations, the Cuban public administration implemented a series of measures aimed at resolving the internal financial crisis. During the first stage those measures were increases in the prices of non-goods; in fixed tariffs, for the sake of cost-effectiveness, and in prices intended to save scarce resources, and the elimination of gratuities not related to basic social activities.

In 1994 a new taxation system was established in order to strengthen the basis for the collection of public revenues, decrease cash surpluses accumulated by the population and bring about a more equitable distribution of wealth.

As to financial management, the Cuban public administration has played particular attention to limiting public expenditures for paying State enterprises subsidies for losses incurred. Therefore, some enterprises have become shareholder companies and others have imposed self-financing regimes. In both cases, an attempt has been made to separate property from management, while other enterprises had rigorous budgets of expenditures imposed upon them. Consequently, the budgetary costs of subsidies paid to State enterprises for losses incurred were reduced by 67 per cent between 1993 and 1995.

The combined impact of these measures led to a reduction of the fiscal deficit. In just two years it decreased from 33 per cent of the gross domestic product to 3.6 per cent. Monetary liquidity decreased by 25 per cent in 18 months, and the informal-economy value of the national currency decreased from 150 pesos to the United States dollar to 21 pesos.

The changes in the functions of Cuban public administration and the need to make it work more flexibly, effectively and efficiently made it necessary to readjust the State sector. During the initial stage, in a streamlining process, the number of central-administration organs was reduced from 50 to 32, either through mergers or abolition.

In the business sector the flow of production and services is being reorganized preserving activity wherever economically justifiable. This involves adapting the size of our production and service enterprises and readjusting capacities in accordance with available production resources in order to achieve the required levels of efficiency.

The growing decentralization of business management and the diversification of the types of property involved in the Cuban economy require the application of credit and fiscal policies as instruments of the macro-economic management of State activities. In this way financial planning and the measurement of economic activity on the basis of results have replaced the system of material balances and of centralized allocation of resources, which characterized the Cuban management system of the past.

In order to strengthen the control function of Cuban public administration new organizational structures were set up. These include the National Auditing Office, which sets standards and ensures compliance with the law, and the National Taxation Administration, which organizes the collection and monitoring of taxes.

Corruption, a phenomenon that grows and erodes public administration, is a crime punishable under the Cuban penal code, thus requiring civil responsibility.

The results of the strategy adopted have proved to be valuable. In 1994, the economic decline was successfully arrested, and the economy grew by 0.7 per cent. Last year the gross domestic product increased by 2.5 per cent, and a slight recovery in the Cuban economy began. It is expected that in 1996 the economy will grow by more than 5 per cent, that investments will increase by 27 per cent and that the budgetary deficit will be reduced to less than 3 per cent.

In general, it can be said that the reforms adopted over a period of barely two and a half years have allowed the gradual and orderly introduction of market mechanisms, with social consensus, in a planned economy, which has begun a process of adaptation to new circumstances without losing our most essential features.

We still have a complicated and difficult road to travel in order to establish the kind of public administration that my people deserve. Domestically, this is because we started from very depressed economic levels, so the increases we have been able to attain have served only to diminish the cumulative effects of negative growth and have not yet been sufficient to satisfy the needs of the country. Internationally, this is because of the uncertainty of the changing circumstances, the difficulty of access to the advances of the technological and computer revolutions and the further deterioration of the environment.

Cuba must also face the brutal and inhuman blockade originally decreed by the Government of the United States in 1962, which has been tightened since the adoption, in 1992, of the so-called Cuban Democracy Act — the Torricelli law — and, more recently, of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act, known as the Helms-Burton law.

This new United States legislative creation is intended to destabilize the Government of Cuba, precisely by suffocating the economy, and this is happening in a world that proclaims its global and interdependent character. The Helms-Burton law is in open contradiction not only to the Charter of the United Nations, but also to the Marrakesh Agreement establishing the World Trade Organization. These documents announced the beginning of a new era of international economic cooperation in an ever-opening commercial system.

This law, as other countries have declared, is an aggression against the international community as a whole and constitutes a dangerous experiment in world Government against which Cuba has given timely warning. Undoubtedly, the increased hostility against my country, as seen in such legislation, continues to be a major obstacle to development and to the work of national public administration.

The report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/50/847 presents a set of interesting recommendations that deserve consideration by the General Assembly. Cuba supports all genuine efforts by the United Nations to improve its contribution in the areas of exchange of information and technical assistance in the field of public administration. This involves not only the strengthening of capacity, but also new resources to revitalize programmes already under way. However, any attempt to confuse this function with that of transforming the United Nations into a centre for and monitoring and investigating the policies and management of national public systems would be counterproductive and illegitimate.

Management and administration practices can be enriched through the exchange of diverse experiences emerging from the specific circumstances of each country, and not through the presumption that universal models can be applied in order to simplify or deny the peculiarities of different administrative systems that have been shaped by the historic conditions, needs and historical traditions of each country.

It is in this spirit that my delegation will participate in the work of this resumed session of the General Assembly.

The Acting President: I now call on Mr. Roger Wilson, Head, Government and Institutions Department, Overseas Development Administration of the United Kingdom.

Mr. Wilson (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom welcomes this special session because it rightly combines the theme of reforming public administration with the development process. This is proving one of the key relationships on the development agenda in the 1990s.

In the United Kingdom, we have pursued the reform of public administration within our own country with conviction. We regard the task of increasing the efficiency and accountability of public services as an integral part of the structural changes which are improving the competitive edge of our economy.

But we also have a tradition of setting public administration firmly in the context of good government. This is not only because public administration is likely to be more competent if it is accountable and more effective if it serves a legitimate Government and operates within the rule of law. It is also because we are convinced that our citizens are entitled to effective ways of expressing their consent in their Government and in their country's development; to have their lives, property and freedoms protected under the law; to be able to hold their Government to account for the use of resources and for its performance; and to expect the system of public administration to serve them in accordance with these rights and to do so effectively and efficiently.

Let me attempt to encapsulate how the British Government has addressed these issues, especially the issues of accountability and competence, in recent years.

The starting point for the British Government has been to redefine the tasks of Government by asking certain key questions.

First, does every service and task need to be done, or could some of the resources be used where they are need more, or could the cost to the taxpayer avoided altogether?

Secondly, if the activity must be carried out, does it need to be done in the public sector? Since 1979, the British Government has pursued a consistent policy of transferring organizations which no longer need to be owned by Government to the private sector. A substantial proportion of the former public sector now operates more efficiently in the private sector, with higher levels of investment, at lower cost to the consumer and with improved standards of service.

Thirdly, where Government needs to be responsible for an activity, does the Government have to carry out the task itself? Well over £1 billion worth of government services have been examined under the Competing for Quality programme. In my own department, the Overseas Development Administration, functions involving over 50 per cent of posts have been tested against the market, often by open tenders.

For those jobs which must be carried out in government, we have asked whether the organization is properly organized for the task. A major theme within the British Civil Service has, therefore, been the focus on performance.

In order to focus government on the job to be done and to encourage change, executive responsibilities have been delegated from Government departments and given to smaller, discrete management units with clear executive responsibilities, against which performance can more easily be measured and to which authority for change can be delegated. Over a hundred such agencies have been created, employing over 70 per cent of civil servants.

In order to provide incentives to the individual, pay and other rewards throughout the public sector are related to individual or group performance, as well as to what is needed to recruit and retain staff. Pay increases in the civil service have been financed for the past four years by increased efficiency, often through reducing numbers of employees.

In order to ensure value for money in public expenditure, a tight control is maintained over costs within government departments. All departments operate continuous efficiency programmes. Individual projects within this programme have yielded savings of up to 40 per cent in the Overseas Development Administration.

A further and central strategy has been a determination to put users first. This is embodied in the Citizen's Charter. The principles of the Charter are: the publication of standards of service; the provision of information on performance and greater openness on all matters relevant to the public's interests; courtesy and helpfulness in dealing with the public; and a willingness to put things right when they go wrong.

This has been the United Kingdom's path to a more accountable and competent public service. Quite how the principles of good government — that is, competence, accountability, legitimacy, the rule of law and respect for human rights — are worked out in practice is for each country to decide. However, we are in no doubt that these principles represent fundamental, universal and instinctive human values. They are reflected in the international covenants to which most countries are parties.

Although the sovereignty of countries remains an undisputed principle, the fact is that our standards of governance are no longer matters of purely internal concern. We now live in a closely interdependent world, so that we are unavoidably reliant, in some measure, on each other's public administration. People and their values, trade and prosperity, disease and environmental impacts move across international boundaries, and our Governments can affect this for better or worse.

Taxpayers in donor countries certainly have strong views on this subject. The British public has shown that it has a commitment to development, but it approaches these matters with a robust common sense. The administration of the British aid programme has for long been subject to close scrutiny to ensure its integrity and efficiency. There is now increasing scrutiny in donor countries of the use which recipient countries make of aid resources, and in some cases there is a sense of disillusionment where recipient Governments and institutions seem unwilling or unable to address issues of competence, efficiency and accountability. Good governance has become a key issue as donor Governments are under increasing pressure to justify their aid programmes to their Parliaments and electorates.

Of course, there are courageous leaders undertaking difficult economic and political transformation without seeking personal gain. These are the countries we prefer to help, and the number of invitations to assist is growing. We increased by a third the number of new good-government project commitments in 1994-95 to 180. Fifteen per cent of our bilateral aid supports good-government activities.

But these are input measures, and we were reminded by our Dutch colleague of the need for output measures. However, even by those measures, the outlook is encouraging. We are in the midst of growing democracy in Latin America, in Eastern Europe, in Asia and in Africa. No fewer than 69 nations have shifted to a multi-party system in the last 10 years. To convert this transition into genuine democracy and good government will be a massive challenge for politicians, for their civil service and peoples. We have heard at this session many inspiring reports of their determination and commitment.

For the future, what are other key issues we need to address?

Could we agree that good government means helping people take greater control over their lives and improving their well-being, as they define it? At the moment the prospects of achieving this are not good; those sections of society which have the greatest need also have the least political power. To address this we have adopted new approaches in our aid programme, such as the participatory management of resources, building on poor people's own knowledge and skills, and supporting education designed specifically to reach poor people.

Women's empowerment is central to this issue. Our agenda was set in the Beijing Declaration at the conclusion of the Fourth World Conference on Women, when it said:

> "Women's empowerment and their full participation on the basis of equality in all spheres of society, including participation in the decision-making process and access to power, are fundamental for the achievement of equality, development and peace". *(A/CONF.177/20, annex I, para. 13)*.

A second issue on which we should also be able to agree is that we need to give increasing attention to the role of governance in the management of conflict, as well as in post-conflict reconstruction. There is no need to remind this forum of the growing urgency of this subject, which arises not only from the number of major conflicts, but also from the increasing proportion of civilian casualties and the numbers of refugees. Our understanding of how best to help States emerging from conflict to restore peace and essential public services is likely to be sorely tested.

A third issue for our future agenda is how Governments can cooperate most effectively to address issues of good government. Ideally, these arrangements will be more open and participatory, involving also elements of civil society.

How should these matters and the reports of the Secretary- General and the Group of Experts be followed up? We should recognize that the primary responsibility for good Government and public administration lies with Member States of the United Nations system, and that the task of offering support for reform is shared between donor Governments — those Governments like Malaysia and Tunisia, that have offered to exchange information — international institutions and the United Nations system.

In considering the United Nations system's role in this, it is reasonable to require it to set an example of effective administration and the efficient use of resources. We should like to see it ask some fundamental questions about how to optimize its role and whether its structures are presently designed to achieve its objectives effectively and efficiently.

In addressing these questions, we hope that the United Nations system will bear in mind its present financial climate; that it will base its approach on existing institutions as proposed by the Presidency of the European Union; and that it will consider carefully the reflections in the Netherlands statement about the strengths of the United Nations Development Programme in operational areas.

As many Member States know, answering these sorts of questions is always difficult, sometimes painful but eventually worthwhile.

The Acting President: I call now on Mr. Udol Boonprakob, Secretary-General, Office of the Civil Service Commission of Thailand.

Mr. Boonprakob (Thailand): For over 700 years of our independence, Thailand has enjoyed a tradition of strong bureaucracy, so strong that the country's political system was called a "bureaucratic polity". It is an undeniable fact that Thai bureaucracy is a key element for continuing national social and economic development in the face of colonial threats, political instability, external power encroachment and public turmoil. This is reflected in the continual economic growth of 7 per cent to 8 per cent in the last decade. Evidently, support from the public sector plays a significant part in strengthening the private sector and bringing it to the forefront.

In a globalized society, rapid socio-economic and technological changes, rising demands for quality services, the need for higher international competitiveness, and increasing domestic and external pressures have all put the public sector to a real and dangerous test. Within the present structural and working context, this challenge has pushed the public service to its limit.

Should the Thai public service continue to function within its traditional, bureaucratic mode of operation, it will no longer be able to perform the kind of functions required of modern and efficient public management. The modern public service is expected to be more accountable, customer-focused, just and adjustable to change, and to serve efficiently as a reliable arm of a democratic Government without any inclination towards any political party.

Yet there are certain constraints which must be eradicated or weakened before an expected vision of the public service can be realized. The civil service is still a large, cumbersome public machinery. Several new agencies are created each year, while its civilian workforce has already passed the 1.5 million mark. Many agencies are performing unnecessary and redundant tasks, often overlapping those of other agencies. The public service functions within a set of complicated, intertwining and often out-of-date rules and regulations. The situation becomes more unsatisfactory combined with unnecessary work procedures. As the private sector prospers, the civil service suffers from the loss of its competent mid-level technocrats and professionals, particularly in the areas of science and technology. Many of those who remain adopt conservative attitudes, a resistance to change, a feudalistic approach to their clients and a lack of clear vision. Senior executive officers work within the constraints of political interference, rigid budgetary and financial practices and uncompromising rules and regulations. Such constraints clearly discourage many chief executive officers from taking innovative actions and reform efforts.

Those constraints thus become persistent targets for reform. Thai Governments have tried various strategies, such as setting up reform committees, empowering the Civil Service Commission to initiate reforms, giving management reform priority in the national development agenda or pinpointing administrative reform aspects in Government public policy.

Though the public continues to complain about malpractice, substandard and occasionally discriminatory services, as well as slow, irresponsive bureaucratic practices, some progress has been pushed through. I shall give some examples beginning with manpower control. Various measures are used to reduce the size of the Thai civil service. From a growth of 3 per cent to 5 per cent each year during the past decade, the Government now estimates such growth to be less than 2 per cent in 1995.

My next example is manpower development. Senior executives and managers are required to attend training sessions organized by the Civil Service Commission and other agencies as part of their career promotion.

I turn to information technology and modern office equipment. Modern information technology and office equipment are increasingly being supplied to public agencies, and staffs are becoming more familiarized with them.

My next example is outsourcing. More and more jobs are now privatized or commissioned out to the private sector.

Another example is incentives. While compensation for civil servants is still lower than that in the market, the gap is getting smaller. In 1992, the Government made a salary adjustment which resulted in an increase of about 23 per cent for civil servants. Professionals, especially in the areas of science and technology, and academics also received extra pay beyond their regular salary. My final example is decentralization. More and more discretion is given to the counter offices and operation agencies.

Beyond those efforts, other reform activities are under way.

First, with regard to the re-engineering programme for selected agencies, starting in 1996, the pilot agencies involved in this programme — the Revenue Department and the Social Security Department, for example — will enjoy a relaxation of rules and other personnel and financial constraints.

Secondly, reform research focusing on manpower, budgetary and financial processes, procurement, information technology, deregulation, structure and agencies' functions, aims to reduce some of the basic constraints for effective civil service and to pave the way for future planning and strategy.

Thirdly, research on structural adjustment, which will be completed in 1996, will lead the way to major structural change in public organizations' power and their roles.

The reform endeavour in Thailand over the past five years can be summed up as follows: 1992, changing the role of the Government; 1993, streamlining the bureaucracy; 1994, compensation reform; 1995, performance improvement; 1996, public sector re-engineering.

All these efforts should lead to: a bureaucracy of the proper size, focusing on roles and functions most needed by society; public learning organizations which are readily adjustable to change; a competent, accountable, customer-concerned and confident public service; a dependable public service which is accepted by all sides; and an army of knowledgeable, efficient and outward-looking personnel who are responsive to the needs of society and their customers.

All this having been said, Thailand still needs a major, more systematic and comprehensive reform in order to raise the performance and service standards of its civil service. Such a reform programme requires mutual understanding, participation and support from all the parties involved, be they politicians, civil servants, the mass media or the public at large.

The Acting President: I now call on Mr. Soedjadi Jatnodiprodjo, Expert at the National Institute of Administration of Indonesia.

Mr. Jatnodiprodjo (Indonesia): Let me first, on behalf of the Indonesian delegation, express our deep appreciation to the President for convening this resumed session of the General Assembly to focus on the timely and important theme of public administration and development. I should also like to sincerely thank the Secretary-General for opening these historic meetings and for his informative and cogent words of encouragement. Let me also express our deep appreciation to the United Nations Department for Development Support and Management Services and to the Group of Experts, whose invaluable contribution has laid the necessary groundwork for the success of our deliberations.

My delegation totally agrees with the view that the item before us, public administration and development, is of timely and central importance to Member States. Its urgency and timeliness stem from various sources. I would like to briefly focus on two: globalization and the changing development paradigm.

The world today is essentially characterized by transformation and change, driven primarily by globalization and the liberalization of trade and investment. Other developments, such as the growing recognition of the need for sustainability, interdependence, regionalization and the increasing disengagement of the State from national economies, have also greatly contributed towards defining the newly emerging order. There is no denying that these trends have spawned an entirely new level of complexity, particularly for Government decision makers and management.

Secondly, and equally important, there has been over the past decade a steady evolution of the concept of development. This has been mainly characterized by an increased emphasis on people-centred development and the free enterprise system. The evolution of the new consensus on development has been given further definition and articulation by a continuum of major United Nations conferences in the 1990s. As a result, we have collectively come to recognize five enabling conditions for development, which should be addressed in an integrated manner. These include the economy as an engine of growth; the environment as a basis for sustainability; peace and stability as necessary foundations; as well as justice and democracy as pillars of society and accountability.

The urgent need to eradicate poverty, to foster broad-based participation by people in deciding their own destinies and the need to create employment opportunities have each added to the expanding concept of development. Thus, these dimensions must be included in an integrated approach to development if it is to be effective, widespread and lasting. These should therefore cover the development of greater participation at the local level by strengthening local autonomy at the second level of local government.

That having been said, it is obvious that the 1990s represent a period of extraordinary and difficult challenges to the public administration systems of all Governments. Further, given the vulnerabilities and constraints of developing countries, as well as the increasing complexity of their development tasks, there are formidable obstacles to the management of their development. Thus, as noted in the report of the Secretary-General (A/50/847), many countries face the complex task of trying to reform and redefine the role of government in the pursuit of sustained economic growth and sustainable development.

For these reasons, the convening of the resumed fiftieth session of the General Assembly, the first of its kind, serves to underscore the importance that the international community attaches to the role of public administration and development. In this context, my delegation would like to underline that the development of public administration in any country is very much linked with the political, economic, social and cultural conditions of the country concerned. Thus, there can be no such thing as a set standard model of public administration applicable to all countries. What I believe is commonly agreed is that we need an efficient and effective public administration system for the success of our development, and that the objective of public administration should be primarily to serve the development of our countries, and not vice-versa.

Needless to say, public administration should continually adapt itself and respond to emerging development requirements. It is also clear that if public administration is to continue to provide leadership within the process of achieving sustainable development, it must at the same time earn the trust and confidence of the public and have the ability to respond to its needs and demands. In this respect I cannot deny that the more developed a country becomes the stronger and the higher quality of public administration it needs. The question is not simply whether we need a small public administration because of the stronger role being played by the private sector. Rather, we need a strong and effective public administration to have a balanced approach across the broad range of development programmes. In many cases, including that of Indonesia, a strong public administration has been the main force contributing to the successful path of development.

We in Indonesia have always considered that the development of public administration lies within the context of our country's basic philosophy, which stresses the development of the complete human being, including political, economic, social, cultural and spiritual development. This translates into what we call the "Trilogy of Development", covering equity, economic growth and stability, which is largely similar to the new broadened concept of development at the international level. However, to the extent that there are differences between the approaches, we do not close our eyes to developments in the world at large, and we are committed to adjusting our public administration system to adapt to such changes and globalization. Therefore, the reform process being conducted in the public administration system in Indonesia can be likened to a dynamic rather than a stop-go process.

In this vein, we are open to and continue to assess modernization reforms in the public administration system. For example, improving the structure of the civil service involves "right sizing" the public sector and the introduction of a new remuneration system. Trimming government size to coincide with growing privatization was facilitated by adapting zero growth policies and adjusting the role of the public sector. This involved, among other factors, the privatization of many State-owned companies. These efforts are expected to reduce public expenditure and to generate increased funds for development financing. Moreover, modernization of the civil service has been initiated through several administrative programmes, which were intended to bring about attitudinal and value changes, improve systems and promote productivity and the quality of management. Efforts were also made to link training with career development through structural, functional and technical training. In this regard, special attention has also been given to the holders of Echelon I positions through the national leadership training programme. This exercise is designed to broaden the perspectives of officials through political and administrative perceptions, and to help increase their understanding of government policies and the policy-making process.

The whole exercise is intended to establish a public administration which is responsive to development needs and at the same time can improve service delivery to the people, establish an open, enabling framework for socio-economic activities and provide an impartial and fair framework for socio-economic interactions. These objectives should also help develop a public administration that is innovative and capable of encouraging the active participation of all sectors of society. This would also include the business sector so that it could maximize the potential and opportunities provided by globalization and international development.

In carrying out policies and programmes — particularly in such areas as the adoption of zero growth policies in the civil service — my Government is at the same time faced with a major problem of facilitating new entrants to the workforce. Therefore, in addressing these problems we also focus our efforts on strengthening the private sector, particularly the informal sector. The central purpose of this initiative is to encourage the creativity of the most disadvantaged sector of society so as to bolster its participation in economic activities and the creation of employment opportunities.

Before concluding, I should like to turn to the role of the United Nations system in promoting public administration. My delegation recognizes the importance of several recommendations contained in the report. Obviously, most of the recommendations need to be further reviewed and studied. Some of the recommendations are in fact already being applied in my own country, and, on the basis of that experience alone, we feel confident in our view that the promotion of the national and human capacity-building of the developing countries should become a central objective of United Nations activities in public administration and development. In this respect, my delegation could not agree more on the need to revitalize the function of the United Nations as a clearing house. It would, we believe, help to facilitate the generating, pooling and disseminating of information as well as customizing the best and most appropriate practices. My delegation is convinced that such activities would provide Member States with practical ways to exchange experience as well as to learn from each other, while taking into account the specific situation and conditions in each country. In addition, practical and action-oriented research should inject valuable information into the process for Member States.

While recognizing the importance of the role of the clearing house, my delegation is also interested in the recommendation offered under the rubric of coordination of public administration and development activities within the United Nations system. Such coordination activities are always important in strengthening the efficiency and effectiveness of the United Nations system. But, to be realistic, it is important that such recommendations for improving coordination should not create a new layer of bureaucracy within the system. Rather, they should serve to strengthen the existing coordination mechanisms of the United Nations. In this context, my delegation would like to raise the question of the modalities of the "consultative group". The group is expected to meet once a year, particularly when it is intended to invite other appropriate international organizations or regional professional and research institutions, often outside the United Nations. We believe that such a group would be well positioned to enhance the effective role of the United Nations in promoting effective public administration and development.

In conclusion, I would be remiss if I failed to mention the importance of the United Nations role in providing technical assistance to the developing countries in the field of public administration and development. We view such activities as essential in assisting developing countries to improve their national and human capacity-building. For this reason, we are pleased to note that there are currently 61 active projects in public administration, with 63 others listed as completed, and that in public finance there are 52 active projects, with 22 others listed as completed. We regard the dimension of technical assistance in this area as unquestionably timely and imperative and believe that the United Nations should increasingly focus on it in its future programmes. It is also imperative that Member States should fully support these programmes. I should add that, South-South cooperation would constitute an important dimension in this process, in that it would provide an existing framework that developing countries could fully utilize as a forum for exchanging views and experience and, in particular, for the strengthening of their institutional capacity-building and human resources development. In this process, the United Nations could certainly play a catalytic and development role. We strongly support the role of the United Nations programme in public administration and finance, and earnestly request that General Assembly resolutions should be vigorously followed up.

The Acting President: I now call on the Chairman of the Council for Public Administration of Mongolia, Mr. Lamjavyn Lingov.

Mr. Lingov *(interpretation from Russian):* Mongolia was among the first to co-sponsor General Assembly resolution 49/136 entitled "Public administration and development" which, *inter alia*, called for the resumed session to consider this issue with a view to exchanging the experiences and reviewing the activities of the United Nations in this field and making relevant recommendations.

The timeliness and importance of the issue is highlighted by the fact that the General Assembly, with the participation of many high-level Government representatives, is, for the first time, discussing in a systemic and comprehensive manner the changing role of public administration in meeting the objectives of sustainable human development. The various aspects of this new development strategy were reflected in the results of the recent important global conferences. A major challenge now for national Governments and the international community at large is to translate them into commensurate individual and collective action. In this regard, effective management and good governance acquire an ever-increasing importance.

My delegation believes that the wide-ranging preparatory activities that preceded the resumed session laid a sound basis for meaningful and fruitful deliberations, which will, hopefully, result in formulating specific ideas and recommendations both for national Governments and the United Nations in strengthening the role of public administration in development. We note with particular interest the report of the Group of Experts in Public Administration and Finance (A/50/525) and the relevant report by the Secretary-General (A/50/847), containing many worthwhile practical recommendations.

We understand full well that the task I have mentioned will require continuous efforts at the national and international levels. In this context, we see much merit in the recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's report to the effect that the issue of public administration and development should be included as a regular item on the agenda of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, and that the Group of Experts on Public Administration and Finance should be designated the Committee on Public Administration and Development.

Bearing in mind the importance of the subject matter, it is my delegation's considered view that the role of the United Nations should be further strengthened, especially in providing technical assistance and support in the area of administrative restructuring and reform, human resources development, training, resource mobilization and financial management.

Mongolia has since 1990 been undertaking a transition process towards a market economy. A new Constitution, adopted in 1992, laid down the basis for a humane and civil parliamentary democracy, with a unitary State structure and a multi-party system. The transition to a market economy is integral and comprehensive in nature. It consists of four major processes: the adaptation of the State to its new roles, functions, systems and structures; the creation of a policy, legal and institutional framework; the creation and consolidation of a viable private sector through privatization, enterprise restructuring and small and medium-sized enterprise promotion; and capacity building to achieve those processes in the course of the transition itself.

All of these processes are interrelated. Public administration reform is needed to adapt the State to its new roles, functions, systems and structure. This is necessary to both formulate and implement the policy, legal and institutional framework of the transition process. Both the reformed public administration and the policy, legal and institutional framework have as their aim the creation of an enabling environment for private sector development. The fulfilment by the private sector of its economic and social functions in the market economy in turn creates conditions for an effective adaptation of the public administration and policy to their market economy roles. Capacity-building is a necessary precondition for undertaking effective public sector reforms and private sector development. In addition, institutions entrusted with education, training, consultancy and support systems are also in need of adaptation to the new form of governance and society as a whole. This requires the support of the public and private sectors, as well as of the international donor community, in order for them to be able to play their critical role in the transition process. This process must be phased and sequenced.

The Government is called upon to play a critical role in each of the four basic processes of the transition to a market economy. To be effective, the transition process requires strong Government leadership. The absence of private sector input due to historic circumstances that prevailed for nearly seven decades in Mongolia determined its weakness in the early stages of the transition.

The leadership and management challenges during the transition are far more complex than they would have been in a different situation. It is important for the Government to simultaneously three challenges in the transition process: the normal management of the country to fulfil universal, basic governmental functions and to provide stability; systemic change management; and capacity-building to enable it to undertake the change management of the transition process.

It goes without saying that the overall economic, social and political reforms cannot be successfully completed without public administration reform. Government administrative entities should define clearly their roles and functions in the new circumstances; create an economic, social, fiscal and financial environment enabling them to assume their functions to the fullest extent possible; introduce management methods and skills required in the new circumstances and gain capacity to use fully national human resources.

On the other hand, the main direction of Government administrative entities should be customer-services oriented, outsourcing and making them effective, efficient and cost-effective.

This reform will succeed only if all levels starting from the top of the Government executive branch and going down to every single administrative and territorial unit and entity are involved in it.

Apart from the three challenges, I have referred to Governments also face the tasks of meeting the following needs, confronted by all countries at this historic juncture: first, the need for each country to achieve systemic competitiveness for its economy, given the increasing globalization of the world economy; secondly, the need to develop non-bureaucratic forms of organization, given the inter-sectoral nature of contemporary problems and the short response time required for both decision-making and implementation; thirdly, the need for transparency and accountability in public affairs to avoid systemic corruption; and, fourthly, the need for Government responsiveness to citizens' demands and interests, decentralization and participation.

Bearing all this in mind, the Government of Mongolia has formulated and is implementing an integral, comprehensive Management Development Programme (MDP) that embraces the following three areas: first, public sector reforms, including public administration reform, civil service reform, decentralization and local administration strengthening; secondly, private sector development, including privatization and enterprise restructuring and small and medium-sized enterprise promotion; and, thirdly, policy and support systems, which include policy, legal and institutional framework, management education, training and consultancy, information system and accounting and auditing systems.

The MPD governance structure consists of a Cabinet-level steering committee chaired by the Prime Minister; an MPD working group chaired by a Deputy Prime Minister within the framework of the public/private sector partnership concept; component working groups, with representatives from both the public and private sectors; and management development projects directed by national project managers, under the coordination of the component working groups. In addition to the network of the working groups, each component has an institutional focal point for project execution and accumulation of national expertise in a given area. Ad hoc national project teams assisted by international consultants form the backbone of project work. MDP projects have received technical and advisory assistance from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and support from multilateral and bilateral donors. Staff support for the governance structure and aid coordination is provided by a Strategic Management Unit in the Prime Minister's Office.

The participatory policy and planning process led to the formulation by the component working groups of long-term policies, medium-term programmes and short-run 12-month action plans. These were consolidated in the global programme at the First Global MDP Workshop. Specific measures to generate positive synergies between the components and their focal groups were also incorporated. Annual workshops update the policy, programme and action plan framework and promote synergies among the components and coordination between donors and external cooperation projects.

Within this framework, the public administration and civil service reform component working group formulated in late 1994 a proposal for a public reform policy and a programme and action plan. This was approved by the Cabinet-level steering committee, chaired by the Prime Minister, in early 1995. Subsequently, four national project teams conducted in-depth studies of central Ministries, line Ministries, local administration and the legal framework of the public sector. This work was consolidated in a "Recommended Business Strategy", sub-titled "A Proposal to Re-invent the Government of Mongolia through Reform of the Public Administration". This document was widely discussed at the Second Global MDP Workshop, held in mid-1995 with the participation of national and international experts. The final version was then subsequently considered and approved by the Cabinet for submission to the Parliament. The Parliament of Mongolia is expected to consider the proposal during its spring session this year. A fifth national project team is presently conducting an analysis of the economic implications of the proposal.

The mission statement of our proposed public administration reform reads:

> "To adapt government to the requirements of the transition to a market economy and assist the creation of a viable private sector."

The five strategic objectives of the public administration reform are: to strengthen the national leadership role of the Government and implement major operational improvements; to strengthen the Government's executive management capacity, to strengthen local governance and administration; to provide an enabling environment for the private sector; and to manage public administration reform impacts and adjustments.

In conclusion, I wish to emphasize that Mongolia is keen to exchange experience with other countries in the area of formulating management development programmes as a whole, and public administration reform in particular, as well as their implementation and follow-up. It is my delegation's firm belief that this resumed session of the General Assembly will help promote active cooperation of Member States both between themselves and with the United Nations in this area.

The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.

United Nations A/50/PV.109

General Assembly

Fiftieth Session

Official Records

109th plenary meeting
Wednesday, 17 April 1996, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Freitas do Amaral . . . . (Portugal)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Diallo (Mauritania), Vice-President, took the chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda item 12 *(continued)*

Report of the Economic and Social Council

Report of the Secretary-General (A/50/847)

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Group of Experts on Public Administration and Finance on its twelfth meeting (A/50/525)

Letter from the President of the Economic and Social Council to the President of the General Assembly (A/50/926)

Draft resolution (A/50/L.69)

The Acting President (*interpretation from French*): This morning the General Assembly will continue its plenary meetings devoted to public administration and development.

I call first upon the Permanent Representative of Singapore.

Mr. Kausikan (Singapore): It is a conceit of professional economists to believe that economic development depends primarily on economic science. Clearly, this is, at best, an over-simplification. In fact, professional economists have not been noticeably successful in managing real economies. Ever since 1969, when the Nobel Prize in economics was first awarded, no Nobel Prize for economic science has been given to an economist working in a high-growth economy of East Asia. I offer this observation for what it is worth, and also as another means of congratulating the Government of Morocco and the Department for Development Support and Management Services on organizing this resumed session of the General Assembly on an aspect of the urgent problem of economic development that has not received sufficient attention.

The 1993 World Bank report entitled "The East Asian Miracle" revealed that the miracle was not such a miracle after all. The secret was in getting the macroeconomic fundamentals right. This has been known for decades. The globalization of the world economy has even more sharply focused development issues that policy makers and theoreticians have grappled with for years. The purely economic debate over appropriate development strategies is now, in a real sense, over. Opting out is clearly not an option. It would only accelerate the pace of marginalization.

But if the economics of development is now somewhat better understood, it is still a fact that there has been no, or little, growth in much of the world. The difference has been in public policy. Developing countries that tried to follow the East Asian model have

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96-85462 (E)

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failed, not because they did not know what the correct policies were, but because they lacked the socio-political underpinnings to make such policies stick. It is in providing these underpinnings that the role of the public sector and government — which I define as both the system of politics and the system of administration — is most critical to the development process. And the most important of the socio-political underpinnings of economic development are political stability and good governance. It is government in the public sector that will determine whether a country can plug into the fast-moving global economy or whether it will be bypassed.

Of course, pundits of all colours have, somewhat belatedly, now picked upon "good government" as the catchphrase of the day. Here I would like to flag another phenomenon for the attention of my colleagues. Western intellectuals, and even administrators and businessmen, have a tendency to think of developing country institutions more or less in terms of their own. This is perhaps natural. But it has given rise to fierce debates — of an almost theological flavour — over what constitutes good government. I characterize these debates as theological because, more often than not, they are on the theory of what constitutes good government rather than on the practice.

Needless to say, the acid test of any government in the real world is not its adherence to any particular political theory or ideal, but whether it can govern effectively, fairly and in a way that will improve the general welfare. Governments fail not because they lack lofty ideals but because, in the final analysis, they cannot deliver. It is the harsh test of experience, and not abstract or *a priori* reasoning, that will determine whether any particular form of government is "good". A good government is ultimately one that works, and what works must work pragmatically. What will work in one country will not necessarily work in another — a very simple point, but one too often overlooked. It was Adam Smith, that earliest guru of economic science, who once wryly observed:

> "the learned deny the evidence of their senses to preserve the coherence of the ideas of their imagination"

— an attitude that, alas, has spelled immense troubles for developing countries.

Let me therefore emphasize that Singapore does not hold itself up as a model for anyone, although we are happy to share our experiences with anyone who may be interested, and we have systematized this through the Singapore Cooperation Programme. No one can prescribe any particular model of political development or public administration for any country. When this is attempted with only a superficial understanding of the complexities of specific situations, it leads to disaster. Our basic assumption is the fundamentally pragmatic and pluralist one that there are no models that can be applied everywhere. Of course, this does not mean that we should not study as wide a range of experiences as possible. It is only in this modest spirit that we have been so bold as to offer some comments on Singapore's experience which may be of some interest to a wider audience.

Singapore has enjoyed a stable political environment over the last three decades. Investors expect this stability to continue. They dare to make long-term plans without having to worry about reversals in government policy or, worse still, about political unrest and chaos. Indeed, foreign investors in Singapore frequently cite political stability as the single most important factor that influenced their decision to invest in Singapore. The correlation between political stability and economic growth is not unique to Singapore. There are many studies that have shown that economic growth has been significantly lower where there are frequent changes in government or political unrest.

In Singapore political stability is based on three interrelated factors which collectively define good government in our country. These are political accountability, a long-term orientation and social justice.

For long-term stability, Governments must govern with the support and consent of the governed. In Singapore, the constitution provides for parliamentary elections every five years. There is universal suffrage for all citizens over 21 years of age. Political accountability in Singapore is therefore through free, fair and clean elections, similar to those in most Western societies. But this need for periodic free and fair elections does not prescribe any specific model of political system or ideology. The clash and clamour of contending interests, street demonstrations and a rambunctious press may make for more exciting television; they may even work for some Governments and countries. But more often than not, they contradict the second pillar of good government, which is a long-term orientation.

Singapore's political culture — an administrative culture — is not based on a fundamental distrust of government, at best, a necessary evil that must always be kept in check or be made to respond to the idiosyncrasies of the electorate at every twist and turn of fortune. This model of government can be vulnerable to economic populism and makes it difficult to take a long-term orientation. In Singapore the Government acts more like a trustee. The public sector, as custodian of the people's welfare, exercises independent judgement on what is in the long-term economic interest of the people and acts on that basis.

Government policy is not dictated by opinion polls or referendums. This has sometimes meant overriding populist pressures for "easier" economic policies. Indeed, implementing the right policies has on occasion meant administering very bitter medicine to overcome economic challenges. Our experience has convinced us that the first duty of government is to govern, and to govern fairly and morally. Acting as trustee has also placed greater responsibility on the political leadership and public sector to govern in a morally upright way. At times this has required stern action to deal with sectional pressures and to take quick, transparent, fair and implacable measures against corruption.

This trusteeship model of democracy to which Singapore has subscribed has enabled us to pursue the tough policies necessary for economic development. The concept of government as trustee goes hand-in-hand with accountability. Because the Government has acted as an honest and competent trustee of the people, it has been returned to power in every general election since Singapore achieved self-government in 1959. With a comfortable majority and strong mandate, we have been able to take a long-term view in addressing our economic problems.

A long-term orientation has also been a feature of other East Asian Governments. They too have been willing to impose short-term sacrifice in order to gain long-term benefits. Ultimately, good government is not just about having free and fair elections. It is about implementing policies for the long-term public good, even if such policies are unpopular in the short term.

The third element of good government is the ability to achieve social justice. In Singapore this is done through equal treatment of all groups and by providing those who have fallen behind with opportunities to catch up. We have been fair to all ethnic, religious, economic and social groups. The Government is thus not beholden to any special interest. This is important in any society, but all the more so in a multiracial one like Singapore, where maintaining harmony has, on occasion, again required a firm hand.

The other dimension of social justice in Singapore is the Government's effort to provide every citizen with an equal opportunity to compete and succeed. We emphasize economic efficiency and meritocracy. We have also always been conscious of the need to prevent a gradual stratification of society by class distinctions. But our efforts to level up society have always been motivated by the principle of equality of opportunity as opposed to equality of outcome. Everyone should have the opportunity to run in the race. Not everyone will finish the race at the same time. This reality is the reason why the Government has heavily subsidized its social infrastructure: education, housing and basic health care. But it has refrained from spending too much on social welfare grants, unemployment benefits and subsidies for consumption. Excessive spending on social welfare erodes the work ethic, discourages enterprise and weakens the family unit. On the other hand, spending on social infrastructure provides equal opportunities for all, thereby facilitating social mobility.

This general approach to the role of the public sector and government has guided us through the economic challenges of three decades of independence. Economic development is a race with no end. It requires constant effort and constant adaptation. There is no end to history. No society in the real world will ever find that eternally still, fixed point of perpetual and perfect equilibrium. If any society harbours illusions of having reached such a state of nirvana, it will soon decline. Adaptation of government, the public sector, and indeed of the private sector and of the individual to new challenges must be continuous. But any organization that changes only in reaction to circumstances becomes a slave to circumstances. In Singapore, we have embraced change as a necessary way of life — as an instrument for improvement and advancement. Perhaps it has been easier for us to accept this because we are a very small country with few other choices.

Change is continuous, but the philosophy of public sector economic management in Singapore has been underpinned by two broad principles that have remained relatively constant. First, the economy operates on the free market system. Market forces are allowed to prevail so that our businesses and industries are able to respond to market signals and adjust their strategies accordingly.

Scarce economic resources are allocated and used efficiently. As far as possible, the Government takes a non-interventionist approach to the economic decisions of firms, unless there are overriding social or political concerns.

Secondly, there is a high degree of outward orientation in the economy. Singapore is highly open to international trade and investment. Our trade to gross domestic product (GDP) ratio is almost 300 per cent — the highest in the world. We have allowed open competition not only among domestic firms, but also from foreign firms and products. This ensures that local companies remain globally competitive.

We believe that regional and world growth depends on the freedom of opportunity and economic linkages among economies. We therefore look outward, and we work with like-minded countries in international and regional forums such as the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and the World Trade Organization (WTO) to advance the cause of free trade. Regionally, we recognize that Singapore's prosperity depends on the prosperity of our neighbours and that our prosperity in turn benefits them. Development is not a zero-sum game.

Public sector economic management in Singapore is undertaken at the macro-level mainly to identify problems or opportunities and to set broad growth directions and strategies. This macroeconomic management role is carried out by government's performing three functions.

First, the Government provides a stable environment for businesses. Prudent financial management ensures that the macroeconomic environment is stable. Fiscal policy in Singapore is guided by the principle that it should support the private sector as the engine of growth. The Singapore Government has been very conservative in its budgetary policy and has balanced its budget in nearly every year for the last 25 years. Monetary policy is geared towards keeping inflation low for long-term competitiveness and to ensure that savings are not debased. The Government also sets clear and transparent ground rules for competition.

Secondly, the Government invests in infrastructure and manpower, areas in which the private sector is likely to underinvest in the absence of government action. The Government ensures that education and training are geared towards the needs of the economy, with a strong emphasis on producing technical and professional manpower. Half of the output of our universities is in science and technical fields.

Thirdly, the Government facilitates businesses, including foreign investors wishing to come to Singapore. This function is carried out mainly by promotional agencies which are statutory boards.

I do not know what the future holds for Singapore or for other countries. The global environment in which developing countries operate will continue to be determined in large part by the major Powers — by their trade policies, their post-cold-war political priorities and their stance towards international cooperation. One thing I can predict with some confidence, however, is that the public sector and Governments will continue to be decisive factors in determining economic growth for the developing world. This is a cause for hope rather than despair. It means that, to a large extent, our destiny lies in our own hands. To grasp it, we must look at the world clinically and pragmatically — not through a distortion lens of some theory or another.

The Acting President (*interpretation from French*): I now call upon the Permanent Representative of Venezuela.

Mr. Tejera París (Venezuela) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The Venezuelan Constitution, statutes and other laws are sold at our newspaper stands, a fact which more than one tourist has found surprising. Since 1864 each law in Venezuela has borne a title that refers only to that text, and when a law is reformed, it must be republished entirely.

The Legislature of 1864, which had just abolished the death penalty, wished to publicize laws as much as possible so that their texts were easily available to every citizen. In Venezuela there are no numbered Acts nor any calls for partial reform; rather, there is a standing invitation to citizens to inform themselves personally about their rights and duties. Many do so with good intentions, but there are always those who read them to avoid their duties — to find loopholes.

Two years ago some bankers, influenced by the fashion for "deregulation", managed to get round the banking laws in that way, thereby causing the most serious financial crisis since 1929. This grave act of corruption was both a cause of and an influence on good administrative customs in a country where over a decade there had been a surprising decline in what had seemed to be firmly based morality, and a democratization of corruption, of bribery of middle and lower officials, on a scale that we had previously only seen elsewhere.

Fortunately, in Venezuela there is a strong, loud repudiation of corruption. The people passionately support the prosecution of those who are corrupt and support new laws and more stringent treaties to facilitate the extradition or punishment of the guilty. One important factor in this was the initiative and perseverance of President Caldera in bringing about the signing of an international treaty against corruption.

These meetings of the General Assembly are intended to ensure an exchange of information and experience on public administration. We feel that the most important step taken in this connection was the adoption on 29 March 1996 in Caracas of the Inter-American Convention against Corruption, which was immediately signed by 21 countries of the hemisphere.

To be able to govern, a Government must have its people's respect. No one respects a corrupt Government or a judicial system that is soft on crime; nor can anyone respect a verbose or weak Parliament. The three branches must serve their purposes; they must stand ready to progress and to reform themselves, in keeping with social needs.

I would like to ask the General Assembly today to give priority to the fight against corruption and ensure that the globalization that facilitates the speedy transfer of money and the speedy passage of individuals is supplemented by the equally speedy extradition of criminals and their loot. This is what the people want, and it would mean that justice was done.

There are countries — major countries — where domestic corruption is successfully prosecuted but the shameful practice of bribing officials in other countries is condoned. Their major companies, some of them State enterprises, including arms manufacturers, have provisions in their budgets for entertaining and bribing foreign officials. There are even tax allowances against the payments to these Judases.

On the other hand, the United States has for years had laws that severely punish those who, in order to sell their products, dare to bribe foreign officials. This example should be followed by all countries. A general treaty such as the hemispheric Convention signed in March in Caracas would be a great contribution to enhancing authority where it is weak or non-existent.

Immorality and lawlessness are not exclusive to any one country. In his speech at the multidisciplinary meeting against corruption that the Council of Europe held recently in Strasbourg, President Caldera said:

> "Corruption is one of the major threats to societies with European democratic systems."

At this international Assembly, I would say that corruption in general and administrative corruption in particular are world-wide threats, and as such require to be dealt with collectively by all countries, acting in solidarity.

The fight against corruption has become a political problem. No less political is the need to improve public administration and the functioning of the legal, legislative and executive powers. Beginning with Moses, who invented the administrative pyramid — which is certainly an endangered species — and continuing with Bagehot, Weber, Gulick, Taylor, Urwick, Galbraith, Fayol and other pioneers of administrative science, every country has added one committee after another on administrative reform and created ministries and bodies whose names reflect the passing fashions of our science.

The experts in attendance here will remember all the formulas and panaceas that have been proposed to solve administrative problems. In the 1930s, Mr. Kemmerer passed through our continent, preaching the gospel of auditors' bureaux, which were then set up in countries where they already existed under other names. After Graicunas took control, we saw the avoidance of duplication, overlapping, coordination — for one did not "order" or "direct", one "coordinated" — programming — instead of "planning" — and other prescriptions, right down to the most recent: transparency, accountability, privatization, downsizing — with its implication of massive lay-offs — and decentralization. As in pharmacology, the success of each remedy depends on who is administering it and to whom; each has its merit, but only in the right dosage.

Today, when we know that the administrative pyramid needs truncating and that reorganization must proceed through processes rather than tasks, some are still solemnly devoted to designing flow charts, shifting blocks from side to the other. There are as many varieties of these flow charts as there are styles between renaissance and abstract art, although, judging by their girth, the flow charts issued by some ministries certainly seem to be inspired by Botero.

Ms. Kamarck, on behalf of the United States, reported on the efforts to reduce and streamline bureaucracy in her country, in which there are 2 million public employees. She should be consoled by the fact that the Ministry of Education of Venezuela alone manages 500,000 teachers, represented, I believe, by 17 trade unions. This Ministry has had its successes and does not deserve to justify the superficial comment made in a United Nations report, frivolously entitled "Towards a new paradigm of State action in the social sphere", that, in Venezuela:

> "The experiment of leadership in social policy from a key ministry ... illustrates the problem of coordinating activities through a single ministry."

Pity the poor Ministry of Education; but it is not alone in this regard. There are at least four other ministries, 23 governing branches and hundreds of municipalities — all decentralized — trying to improve the lot of 22 million inhabitants, 60 per cent of whom are under the age of 22.

Venezuelan public administration must also be recognized for its successes in education, health, the establishment of a huge infrastructure, and the preservation of the environment and enormous national parks. All of this was achieved through a fairly centralized administration. Today, constitutional development in Venezuela tends towards strengthening states and cities — that is, towards decentralization. It is dangerous, however, to be too passionate about decentralization when we have to solve new problems that keep cropping up, such as the very serious problem of maintaining what already exists. In physical infrastructure in particular — highways, for instance — the World Bank tells us that every penny not invested in timely maintenance will triple the cost of roadway and vehicle repair. Undoubtedly, even more harm could be done to hospitals, schools and other institutions.

I do not wish to end my statement on an anticlimactic note, but I must confess: for nearly seven years, I was a United Nations expert on public administration. In my time, I distributed flow charts, founded schools of administration and advised on planning systems. For half a century I have followed the development of technical assistance and studies on our science carried out by the Division of Public Administration. I can assure the General Assembly that the knowledge and information that have been piled up are invaluable. For two decades, meetings of experts have been held that have led to the birth of a new branch of administrative science, that of policy formulation. Now, within our Secretariat, there are several schools of thought or think tanks — as they say, comparing thinkers with fish — endowed with brains that are certainly qualified to offer advice to Governments. I believe that this was also alluded to by my colleague Mr. Biegman, the Permanent Representative of the Netherlands, when he called for greater specialization in the Secretariat's work.

In all administration, there is an unchangeable binomial: administration is planning and implementation. He who implements without planning is like one who acts without forethought or reason. He who plans without implementing is a dreamer. The good leader cannot lose sight of his objectives, which he defines by means of formulated policies. He or she should show that what counts in government action is the "for what" and not the "why". Sadly, those administrators who fail tend to favour the latter.

The perception of clear aims is the best motivation for a public employee in his work. The examples of honesty and austerity in those who govern inspire respect and a willingness to follow orders. A sound system of selection and social protection for the employee is also very useful. But when analysing the role of public functions in development, one must find way to lend stability to honest officials while keeping it from those who, out of a sense of invulnerability and encouraged by a culture of consumerism and unscrupulous dealers, exploit the panoply of useless regulations and controls at their disposal to deliver themselves with impunity to bribery.

I hope that meetings such as this will stimulate social reform and strengthen the educational system necessary for creating the right conditions for good administration.

The Acting President (*interpretation from French*): I now call on Mrs. Sirpa Kekkonen, Director, Division of Public Management Reform, Finnish Institute of Public Management.

Mrs. Kekkonen (Finland): Finland shares the views expressed in the statement delivered by Mr. Motzo, Minister for Civil Services, Regional and Institutional Affairs of Italy, on behalf of the European Union, and associates itself fully with those views.

Finland attaches great importance to this resumed fiftieth session of the General Assembly on public administration and development. An efficient, effective, well-functioning and transparent public administration is a prerequisite for the development and management of public services in all countries. We welcome the comprehensive and development-oriented discussion of the role of public administration on the basis of the three broad objectives specified in the informative report of the Group of Experts: effective and participatory governance, the emergence of a global market economy and increased recognition of issues of social justice. We also appreciate the thrust of the resumed session in drawing on the experiences of individual countries. We believe that, despite the different circumstances and administrative cultures of each country, those common, basic objectives can be reached.

Strong commitment by both government and civil society is required in order to enhance sustainable development. This strong commitment is best facilitated by an open and democratic society in which human rights and the rule of law are respected. Human-centred development contains popular participation in the political process, in decision-making regarding development options and in the management of economic and human resources.

We recognize the difficulties countries encounter in their efforts to develop a committed and development-oriented public administration, particularly now when the public sectors in developing and industrialized countries alike are facing big challenges resulting from globalization and simultaneous resource constraints. In many developing countries, structural adjustment programmes call for deep reforms. Also, in industrialized countries, the public sectors are under tight scrutiny. There are apparent needs for new models of decision-making and public management. Globalization calls for alternative ways of doing things, and Governments thus have to consider what they do and how. However, a democratic society cannot be built from the top down. Civil societies should also be allowed to contribute to the strengthening of democracy and a sound administrative culture.

In recent years, Finland has undergone a period of public sector reforms in order to improve the cost-effectiveness of its public sector and to strengthen its economy within its democratic tradition. The core of the reform has been a transition to a performance-oriented public sector entrusted with a special emphasis on the accountability of decision makers and an increased use of market mechanisms in public sector management and operations. The budgetary and financial management systems, as well as personnel management, have been profoundly reformed. Many government functions have been reorganized as public enterprises or companies. Regulatory reform and deregulation are among the important themes on the current reform agenda.

An important element in the new public management system is the decentralization of authority. On the other hand, the current trends emphasize a need to strengthen at the policy-making level the capacity for strategic thinking, long-term vision and well-coordinated action.

Reform of the public sector must, in our view, be strongly focused on the needs and rights of the citizen. From the citizen's point of view, basic values traditionally supported by the Finnish public sector, such as equity and justice, also have to be safeguarded in the future. The public administration is there for the citizens, and for them it is equally important that the public sector has a capacity to serve the economy, not vice versa.

Declining confidence in government could lead to growing tensions, and calls for a need to look at questions concerning public sector ethics, standards and codes of conduct. New models of private-public partnership may be one way towards a government that is more responsive to citizens' needs and better able to serve the economy and civil society in a turbulent and increasingly interdependent world.

A crucial issue is how the public sector acquires and maintains the ability to respond to rapidly changing situations. Accurate analyses, visions and a variety of alternatives are essential for appropriate and effective planning and for combining stability with flexibility. It is vital, for the success of public sector reforms, to involve the personnel in the process, because a paramount part of development work consists of the creation of a basis for a changed administrative culture. It should also be evident that emphasizing the capacity-building, training and skills development of public sector managers and personnel is of vital importance.

The Finnish development cooperation policy stresses the commitment of the recipient countries to, and their ownership of, the development process. We support economically, environmentally, socially and administratively sustainable national efforts, including the necessary structural reforms. We also support efforts directed towards decentralization and strengthening the local level of administration. Conformity to law, the abolishment of corruption and the political and legal accountability of decision makers are of great importance. It is essential to promote participatory approaches at all levels of society in the implementation of development activities. The promotion of an enabling environment for private sector participation is also a major objective for Finnish development cooperation.

The role and functioning of public administration in relation to development should be considered throughout the United Nations system, including in its operative funds, programmes and specialized agencies. We see two major tasks for the United Nations in the area of public administration: first, to provide a global platform for issues concerning public administration and development, particularly the follow-up of this resumed session; and, secondly, to be an agent for improving public administration and governance in developing countries and in countries with economies in transition, with special emphasis on the least developed countries. In our view, these tasks do not require the creation of new administrative or intergovernmental structures. Support for operational activities in this sector should be primarily channelled through existing structures, in particular through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which are already present in practically all the recipient countries.

The Acting President (*interpretation from French*): I call on His Excellency Mr. Yossi Beilin, Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister of Israel.

Mr. Beilin (Israel): I am honoured to be able to speak before the General Assembly, a forum of statesmen and professionals dedicated to the improvement of public administration and reform of civil service. This meeting offers me an excellent opportunity to exchange views about public service with scholars and policy makers, as well as to become more familiar with the concrete efforts undertaken by other Governments in adapting their administrative structures to the demands of changing, modernizing societies.

I do not believe that there is any need to elaborate on the point that it is incumbent upon civil services everywhere to adjust themselves to an era in which they will be expected to be more economically stringent yet more efficient and more responsive to citizens' demands. These two trends are putting political leaders, planners and public servants directly in contact with the citizen into a bind, into a situation of conflict. They must now contend with seemingly incompatible goals: those of providing better services more effectively, while living within often drastically diminished budgets. We in Israel share, I believe, the view that resolving this conflict in a just and democratic manner is the major goal of civil service reform in the coming years.

The strategy guiding our efforts is based on progressive models of management in the public sector, but also on an awareness that structural and procedural reforms must take account of the historical, political and social contexts, as well as the economic constraints, of the civil society in which they are enacted.

Although Israel sees itself as a small, young country, it proudly counts itself among the veteran Member nations of the United Nations. Furthermore, the rapid growth of our population over the past 50 years has placed us in a position in which our public administration must confront many problems shared, apparently, by other, larger United Nations Member States.

While Israel was established as a sovereign State in 1948, the historical roots of its social institutions and government structure were laid down in the 1920s and 1930s. Many critical organizational structures, including its judicial system, were also borrowed, if not inherited, from the British mandate. It is this legacy of administrative structure and process which we are currently attempting to modernize.

The fact that we have been preoccupied with guaranteeing our survival, protecting our security, absorbing refugees and immigrants and constructing a modern State, in the fullest sense of the word, has prevented us from directing sufficient energy to the task of civil service reform and synchronizing adjustments to the fluid needs of our dynamic society. The changes taking place throughout the world, particularly in the Middle East, such as the expanding peace process and the significant improvement of our economy, are now affording us the opportunity to concentrate more of our energies and resources to those ends.

I was very pleased to observe that a number of the approaches guiding our efforts, as well as some of the principles lying at the foundation of the reforms we are currently enacting, were embraced by the delegates and experts from other nations who participated in the preparatory meetings for this important session.

I think I can safely say that privatization, decentralization and the delegation of authority, in tandem with enhanced coordination, are the cornerstones of Israel's efforts to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of its public service, particularly of the agencies providing services directly to its citizens. In the report published by the regional conference on the role of the public administration in the promotion of economic reforms, which was held earlier this year in Berlin, I discovered a number of statements, related to the three principles I have just mentioned, which I wholeheartedly embrace. For example, it was noted that reform of the public sector is mandatory in every nation undergoing the transformation from a highly centralized economy to a market economy capable of being integrated within the global market. In such conditions, the role of the State must be redefined. Furthermore, the approach to reform should envisage the public administration as a system constantly adapting itself to the needs of the consumer and the demands of the citizen.

We in Israel, a nation characterized by a high degree of bureaucratic centralization, have encountered serious difficulties involving coordination among State agencies. The problem of departments and agencies unwilling to cooperate out of fear of attempts to undermine their authority is surely familiar to many here. In order to overcome these obstacles, we have inaugurated regular meetings of a forum of the directors general of all the Government's ministries. This mechanism has significantly facilitated cooperation and has provided support for steps aimed at problem resolution.

Another issue which I think requires comment in this context is the process of governmental decision-making. Please permit me to cite an example taken from my own personal experience as a Minister in the Israeli Government. Issues of an extremely professional nature, demanding executive decisions, are often placed before the Government. Obviously, the majority of ministers have little expertise in or experience of many of these subjects, a situation that often leaves them entirely dependent on the information or recommendations received from the minister responsible. That minister has, presumably, already investigated the available options, the best of which are laid before the Government. I thought that it would be more appropriate to present the full range of options before the ministers so that each one could consider the total spectrum before reaching a decision. After my appointment as Minister, with the support of the former Prime Minister, the late Yitzhak Rabin, I initiated the preparation of background papers regarding the major issues on the agenda prior to the Government's weekly meetings. These documents are not position papers; their purpose is to provide analyses of the relevant historical framework, as well as of the significance and potential outcomes of each decision. I can confirm that they have proved to be effective aids in ministerial decision-making.

Moreover, we have also been conducting in-depth discussions on the subjects of planning and budgeting government operations. We have agreed to limit the total number of government ministries. An amendment passed to our basic law on government restricts the number of ministers to 18 after the coming elections in May 1996. The actual number of ministries may feasibly be even lower.

I would like to mention an example of this proposed reform, one that has already been undertaken. As of March 1996, I have been serving as Minister in the Prime Minister's Office, rather than as Minister for Economy and Planning. This change was enacted after I recommended, during my term of office, that the Ministry for Economy and Planning be disbanded. It had come to my attention that this Ministry's existence as a unique, independent body was unjustified. Its separate departments could easily and more rationally be integrated within a number of other ministries. This action was taken as part of our efforts to make the Government as compact and efficient as possible.

Although I uphold the philosophy that every government agency should determine its own policy and operational objectives, as well as autonomously control implementation of that policy and the flow of outputs, I do not believe that this implies that agencies should supply the whole range of associated services. I believe it preferable that the direct suppliers of public services — such as health, education and social welfare — should compete among themselves for their clients. By operating according to the principles of competition, we can achieve a significant reduction in public expenditures and enhance the efficiency of service provision.

Nevertheless, when introducing this conception of service delivery, we should continuously bear in mind that the client is also a citizen, an individual who pays the taxes that in essence support the very institutions whose services the Government has been mandated to supply. The continued recognition of the salience of the public nature of these services should shepherd us along the road to reform.

It appears to me that all democratic countries, including Israel and all those marching towards democratization and a free economy, share a number of characteristics. These elements furnish the impetus for the reforms we are attempting to implement in Israel — reforms which I am convinced we must continue to support.

The first characteristic pertains to expanding needs in the face of shrinking budgets, a trend accompanied by acute public opposition to tax increases. The functional and financial capabilities of government institutions appear unable to keep pace with the rate at which needs are developing or with public expectations of expanded service and progressive improvements in the quality of life.

The second characteristic has to do with the public's dissatisfaction with the performance of government and the public administration on the national and local levels.

The third characteristic pertains to the planning and execution of projects and programmes motivated primarily by short-sighted political interests or the desire to satisfy specific segments of the population. These projects, which are not always perceived as imperative by the majority of citizens, continue to be financed despite their high costs and debatable tangible outputs.

Our fourth characteristic is the changing relationship between the individual citizen and the State, a consequence of such factors as altered attitudes, the role of the media and the increasing flow of information so characteristic of the modern age. This new relationship can be rephrased as a revised conception of one's civil rights. The individual citizen in Israel and elsewhere is more conscious than ever of his political, economic and social rights. Accordingly, democratic Governments are duty-bound to respond to the rising expectations of their citizens with respect to the exercise of those rights and the demands they entail.

In this context, I would like to mention how Israel's civil service has responded to the needs of two distinct groups in our society. I am, or course, referring to the wave of new immigrants from the former Soviet Union and Ethiopia, as well as our two large national minorities, the Israeli Arabs and the Druze. The civil service has opened its ranks to new immigrants not simply to supply employment, a basic necessity for every citizen, but, most importantly, as a measure to increase the system's sensitivity to the special needs of these two populations. In regard to our Arab and Druze minorities, a targeted affirmative action programme has been successfully instituted. I am pleased to be able to report a 20 per cent increase in minority employment over the past two years — a rate exceeding the expectations of the core programme.

The bureaucratic models we are all acquainted with, those historically adopted in constructing our public administration and systems of governance, are now being replaced. The new approaches emphasize decentralization, autonomy, specialization, quality of service, participatory decision-making, management by objectives, differential compensation and accountability. They are, in fact, expanding the horizons of the traditional concept of public service.

In light of the characteristics I have mentioned and the availability of new models of public administration management, the reforms being implemented in Israel have been conceived in terms of four primary objectives. The first is a significant reduction in the size of the civil service, the resources allocated and the sectors experiencing government intervention. The second entails a redefinition of the authority and responsibilities of Government ministries as strategic staff agencies concentrating on policy formation, oversight and the systematic evaluation of operational programmes. The third consists of improvement in the implementational and regulatory capabilities of executive bodies in management development, budgeting, wage policy and the utilization of human resources. The fourth goal is the conversion of a number of administrative agencies into autonomous, instrumental profit-cost centres.

The accomplishment of these four goals is dependent on the application of three focal principles of public administration reform — decentralization, delegation of authority and personal accountability — in addition to budgeting by operation and output. The framework of the current debate does not permit me to expand on the subject, but I assume that representatives are familiar with these and other related concepts and models.

I find it encouraging that similar trends in governmental and administrative reform are in evidence in so many nations. They indicate the degree to which other Governments are conscious of the need to introduce measures for upgrading their public service capabilities. I feel I can also assume that we all appreciate how problematic it is to implement such a change and how difficult it is to coordinate the needs of all the public and private actors and interests involved. After all, we are not simply modifying structures or processes; we are revolutionizing the very concept of public service held by all the stakeholders.

In concluding my remarks, I wish to reaffirm the two principles advocated at the conclusion of the international seminar on public administration held last month in Rio de Janeiro. I find them particularly pertinent to our discussion. These principles are, first, that Governments can realize higher efficiency by promoting private enterprise for the delivery of services formerly provided by the public sector and, secondly, that new models of public administration should stress the partnership between public administration and civil society.

If I may, however, I would like to close with a reference to the basic tenet underlying our approach to civil service reform. We in Israel do not perceive reform as a tactic for fighting the fires of public discontent over the delivery of one service or another. On the contrary, we regard reform as a strategy of periodic review of the issues on the public agenda, of planning and implementation of modifications and of evaluation of their results. Such reassessments are imperative if the civil service is to evolve in tandem with society and thereby remain a viable instrument for the execution of policy.

The Acting President (*interpretation from French*): I now call on the representative of Albania.

Mr. Kulla (Albania) (*interpretation from French*): May I first congratulate the Secretary-General on his very detailed report, which offers Member States new perspectives on the effectiveness of public administration and the role of the Organization in this regard.

For four years now Albania has been on the path of democracy, and dynamic changes have taken place in all areas. Departing from a system in which everything belonged to the State and was controlled centrally by the State, Albania had to face the challenge of establishing a democratic system and a market economy.

The major objectives of the Albanian Administration that emerged from the democratic elections of 1992 were the following: decentralization and a new orientation of the State; the separation of powers and the establishment of their autonomy; the establishment of the rule of law; the institutionalization of private property and the protection of the right to private ownership; and the establishment and proper functioning of local government.

Four years later, we can assert that the establishment of a democratic system and economic stability are already a reality in Albania. Programmes of assistance provided by financial institutions and other international organizations have played a part in this. In a very short period of time, we have achieved the privatization of medium-sized enterprises and of land, liberalized prices, brought inflation under control, stabilized the country's currency and created a favourable climate for foreign investment.

This economic reform has gone hand in hand with the enactment of up-to-date legislation that supports privatization, foreign investment, the new banking system and the system of customs and taxes. All this has created the institutional framework essential to the progress of economic reform in Albania.

Within this context, the establishment of a modern administration modelled after those of the developed countries continues to be a priority for the Government. Reform in the area of administration has focused on, first, serving taxpayers in the best way possible and supporting development through the organization of work at all levels of central and local administration — to this end, we are now in the process of defining politically a programme that determines the mission of various segments of public administration; second, establishing the most suitable structures for the realization of this mission — so far we have laid down the structure for ministries, and we are now continuing this work for other offices of central and local administration in order to define precisely the roles of the various levels of administration, to separate powers, to do away with parallel structures and to fill in gaps; third, after establishing these structures, enlisting qualified personnel and furthering their professional education; fourth, improving the image of the civil servant, which is closely linked to his credibility as an employee — to that end, the Albanian Parliament has just passed a law on service in public administration; fifth, controlling the number of employees in administration, as well as their salaries, through an integrated salary scale; and sixth, separating the roles of political, administrative and executive posts in order to contribute to the effectiveness of the administration's performance.

Currently in Albania, various United Nations organs, such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the European Union are undertaking assistance programmes for the encouragement of the private sector, construction of the infrastructure, protection of the environment and reform of the banking system. I would like to take this opportunity to thank those institutions for the technical and financial assistance they have afforded to Albania through those programmes.

In order to follow closely the reform of public administration structures, we have created the Department of Public Administration, linked to the Council of Ministers, as well as an intersectoral working group. After two years of work, that Department has achieved, *inter alia*, the drafting of a manual of government, the establishment of an information centre for public administration under the auspices of the Council of Ministers, and the creation of a draft civil service code and a draft code of ethics. It is also working to establish a system for the training, recruitment and promotion of public administration employees.

We have given particular attention to strengthening local government by organizing courses for professionals so that reform will be carried out at the levels of central and local administration at the same rate.

We attach particular importance to the recommendations found in the Secretary-General's report on the creation of special advisory bodies, programmes for developing infrastructure, the consideration of environmental protection standards, the establishment of a professional taxation administration, the adoption of a complete legal framework for administration and for strengthening the role of the courts in resolving administrative conflicts, and the ratification of the conventions of the International Labour Organization on employment and social development.

Albania needs the technical and financial assistance of the United Nations and other international agencies so that it can implement these recommendations, as well as the plans of action adopted at all the United Nations international conferences.

We consider that the recommendations on the restructuring of the United Nations programme in public administration, on the establishment of an emergency fund, on the establishment of an international fund to integrate environmental issues into infrastructure development programmes and on the placement of the Group of Experts under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council will strengthen the role of the Organization in the field of public administration.

The Acting President (*interpretation from French*): I now call on the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Mr. Takht-Ravanchi (Islamic Republic of Iran): I would like to begin by congratulating the Secretary-General and the Group of Experts on the preparation of the reports before us.

The resumed session of the General Assembly on public administration and development provides us with a forum where Member States can address this important issue through an exchange of views and experiences in this field, as outlined by the General Assembly in its resolution 49/136. I would like to enumerate some of the most critical principles which, from our point of view, are integral to a successful debate on this subject.

In his report the Secretary-General recognizes that the role, status and operation of public administration are tied to the unique social, economic and political complexion of each country, and he further indicates that the primary responsibility for any endeavour in this connection rests with national Governments. We fully support the view expressed by the Secretary-General.

It should be noted that this conviction derives inherently from the spirit and the letter of the Charter of the United Nations.

Moreover, because government structures and public management systems vary greatly among countries on the basis of their particular values and historical, cultural and philosophical backgrounds, a comprehensive approach to this matter must incorporate full consideration of these very basic components of development management.

In the light of these principles, as well as of the realities of development priorities and political, economic, social and cultural circumstances, which vary widely from country to country, it would be quite difficult, if not impossible, to identify and suggest a model for a more effective and efficient public administration of development issues that would be uniformly applicable.

While the development and promotion of effective and efficient public management, responsive to the needs of various populations, is an issue of interest to all countries around the globe, it seems that some of the recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's report do not embrace the aforementioned principles and, further, assume that there can be found a perfect and evolved sample of good governance that might be replicable by others.

It is true that to some extent, and in some areas, all countries in the developed and developing world alike suffer from the same maladies, which may, at times, paralyse the administrative machinery and create some impediments to progress. However, these impediments are no match for the unfavourable international development environment and the lack of access to adequate financial resources and technology, which remain among the most critical obstacles to the sustained economic growth and sustainable development of developing countries, and also as prerequisites for a more effective and efficient public administration.

As far as the issues of institutional arrangements and follow-up are concerned, we believe that the existing machinery and mechanism within the United Nations system should continue to operate as in the past and continue to serve as a forum for facilitating the exchange of information and experiences, as well as for providing assistance to individual countries at their request.

May I now make some remarks on the experiences, achievements and challenges faced by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran *vis-à-vis* public administration and development over the past few years. Seventeen years ago, the Islamic Republic of Iran inherited from the previous regime, among other conditions, an economy highly dependent on oil export revenues; widespread poverty and illiteracy, particularly in rural areas; insufficient basic services and infrastructures; and an inefficient Government apparatus.

This situation was aggravated, at the beginning of the 1980s, by the imposition of a devastating eight-year war, which necessitated the mobilization of a considerable share of available resources. In addition, the country faced many natural and man-made disasters, including widespread flooding, a horrific earthquake, damages caused by rising sea-water levels, the immigration of millions of people from war-affected areas in neighbouring countries and coercive economic measures directed against our country.

Nevertheless, even under such circumstances, the efforts undertaken throughout the Islamic Republic of Iran to establish a new system based on democracy, freedom, independence and social justice, in accordance with national values, were tremendous, and the first five-year social, economic and cultural development plan was designed and initiated towards the end of the 1980s.

In spite of the adversities of the time at both the domestic and international levels, with the support of the Iranian people an encouraging average annual growth rate of 7.3 per cent during the period of the plan's implementation was achieved.

Economic structural adjustment, privatization, debt servicing measures, a balanced budget, more effective control over monetary aggregates, the introduction of new and innovative financial instruments, the simplification of regulations governing trade and production, the adoption of major steps towards the establishment of a market economy, the undertaking of studies on the better use of public administration services and on the strengthening of the National Organization of Administration Affairs, and the activation of measures to attract foreign investment and expand economic, social and environmental relations and cooperation, *inter alia*, at the regional and subregional levels, are but some of the policies executed under the first plan.

Based on valuable experiences gained and lessons learned from these endeavours, the second five-year development plan was initiated on 21 March 1995, the beginning of the Iranian year.

Examples of Iran's economic and social development achievements in recent years as an indication of the capabilities and capacities of public administration in my country in connection with development include, among others, the following.

First, non-oil exports, which constituted only 5 per cent of the country's foreign trade before the 1979 revolution, reached $5 billion in 1995, representing about 30 per cent of our foreign trade. Second, the direction has shifted towards exporting processed items and goods with higher value added, ranging from canned foods to petrochemicals. Third, the surplus trade balance reached $5 billion in 1995. Fourth, the budget deficit decreased from 50.1 per cent in 1988-1989 to only 1.8 per cent in 1992-1993, and will be zero for the period 1996-1997; at the same time, real gross domestic product growth has averaged about 7 per cent during the last few years.

Fifth, the development budget's share of the total increased from 19.4 per cent in 1988-1989 to 38 per cent, and it is foreseen that the ambitious goal of 48 per cent will be reached in 1996-1997, a step unprecedented throughout the history of Iran's economy. Sixth, major headway in infrastructure development has been achieved, so that potable water, roads, schools, telephone service, clinics and other basic services have been brought to tens of thousands of cities, towns and villages, including the remotest areas of the country. By the end of the period of the second development plan — 1995-1999 — some 98.9 per cent of the urban population will be supplied with sanitary piped water.

Seventh, in the energy sector, in addition to the application of economic instruments, major projects have been implemented in order to expand the use of natural gas, which exists abundantly in the country, to provide a lower-pollutant source of energy for urban and rural needs, and thus preserve the environment. It is expected that by the end of the period of the second development plan, the population throughout the country will have access to this service. Investments have also been made towards the use of thermal and nuclear energy, for peaceful purposes, to encourage further the use of clean and renewable sources of energy.

Eighth, efforts are being continued to attain self-sufficiency in the production of medicine and medical equipment. Ninth, while there was a time not so long ago when Iran was dependent on industrialized countries for even the simplest technical problems, today giant projects such as the building of dams, power plants, oil refineries, petrochemical complexes and subways are designed and implemented by Iranians. For instance, in the coming days, the momentous project of the Mashhad-Sarakhs Railway will link East Asia and the Central Asian Republics to the major seaports in the Persian Gulf in the south and Europe in the west. This project is completely Iranian-driven.

Tenth, the technical and scientific capabilities and infrastructural development capacities of the country have reached a stage at which the Iranian public and private sectors have entered into technical assistance programmes for the implementation of projects abroad. Eleventh, food production increased from less than 50 per cent of demand in 1979 to 86 per cent in 1995. This occurred during the same period in which the population approximately doubled.

Twelfth, urgent measures continue to be taken to eradicate poverty, particularly through a series of flexible policies, national resource management, full utilization of production capacities and generation of employment. Thirteenth, the insurance industry has had a growth rate of 62 per cent. Fourteenth, the population growth rate decreased from 3.6 to 1.7 per cent. Fifteenth, literacy among the general population increased from 47.5 per cent in 1979 to 82.6 per cent in 1994. During the same period, literacy among women, which was only 35.5 per cent in 1977, reached 78.1 per cent in 1994, and rural area literacy jumped from 30.5 per cent to 75.1 per cent.

Finally, I should like to emphasize that adherence to Islamic values considerably facilitated the tasks of public administration in achieving the targets set forth and the objectives envisaged by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Our experiences and successes indicate, once again, how effective and efficient the public sector can be if it is adapted to and motivated by the beliefs and background of the society it serves.

The Acting President (*interpretation from French*): I call on the representative of Kazakstan.

Mrs. Arystanbekova (Kazakstan) (*interpretation from Russian*): The Republic of Kazakstan recognizes the urgent need to enhance the effectiveness of public administration in order to create favourable conditions for the sustainable development of States, and the steps that have been taken in this regard by the international community, as reflected in the Tangier Declaration, General Assembly resolution 49/136 and other United Nations documents.

The delegation of Kazakstan expresses its appreciation to Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali for his report (A/50/847) on public administration and development and his extremely thought-provoking introductory statement, which set a very active tone for the discussion.

I also wish to note the usefulness and timeliness of the report (A/50/525) of the Group of Experts on Public Administration and Finance which contains extremely thorough analytical material and interesting recommendations.

Kazakstan welcomes United Nations efforts to enhance transparency in measures taken in the field of public administration and development and supports the idea of the coordinating role to be played by the United Nations in providing information and services on the basis of the collection and dissemination of such information, taking into account the experience amassed by the Organization in the field of public administration and development. We also fully share the view that improving administrative systems, providing consultative services, training personnel and other activities require the priority attention of the United Nations and donor States.

The aims and tasks facing the world community in enhancing the role of Governments and State organs in the process of ensuring steady economic growth and sustainable development in all countries are to a large extent reflected in my own country's need to strengthen the potential of public administration and finances.

As it emerges as a sovereign State, the Republic of Kazakstan has been gradually mastering the difficult and contradictory path of transforming its economic relations. In consistently implementing an ongoing liberalization of the economy, we have completely dismantled the earlier central planning system and are building a market infrastructure that ensures the free movement of goods and capital. A process of reform is unfolding in State ownership, giving more room to private enterprise.

For Governments, as for people, the first five years of life are a time of active learning and involvement with the world. And for our country, it has been a time for assuming statehood, forging economic ties, creating the institutions of civil society and carrying out profound socio-economic and political reform.

In the Secretary-General's report and in the draft resolution submitted by the delegation of Morocco, the system of public administration embraces broader aspects, including electoral, judicial and legal reforms and the strengthening of civil society. In this respect, it should be emphasized that the new Constitution of the Republic of Kazakstan enshrines the legal foundations of public administration on the basis of a very clear distinction between the three branches of power: the legislative, the executive and the judiciary. One example of the implementation of these provisions in the Constitution of the Republic was the election of a bicameral legislature, the enactment of judicial and legal reforms and the development and strengthening of the democratic foundations of society.

In accordance with the recently adopted State programme of action extending reforms to the period 1996-1998, together with the most important tasks of strengthening the macroeconomic stabilization that has already been achieved in my country, we plan to pursue structural-institutional reform, to intensify State support for free enterprise, to strengthen the institutions of State power, legality and law and order, as well as monetary and financial discipline. We attach great importance to improving the machinery of State regulation of the economy and to decentralizing the management and implementation of reforms, extending and strengthening the functions of the local organs of executive power.

In the light of our movement into a new stage of transformation — the achievement of constitutional reform — the Government is now undertaking the improvement of administration and taking its information services to a new level. There is a need to bring the main elements of economic administration and agricultural reform to the regional level and to reorganize the civil service.

The Government of the Republic has now begun to pursue a policy that effectively combines centralization and decentralization of the administration in the implementation of reforms and gradually transfers most of the current functions and powers from the Government, ministries and State offices to the regional level, while the decentralization of responsibilities is being reinforced by the appropriate transfer of rights.

The regional policies of the Government are aimed at creating conditions for the effective exploitation of regional factors for economic growth in the regions themselves and the country as a whole, for strengthening the unity and independence of the Republic, for enhancing the people's standard of living and for improving environmental conditions.

The reforms being enacted in the country in the field of public administration respond to the fundamentally new demands being made on civil servants. These involve, above all, improving the professionalism of government employees and making them competent in the most progressive methods of management. It was precisely with this aim that the 1996 law on the Republic's civil service was adopted.

In his letter to the Secretary-General on the results of the World Summit for Social Development, the President of Kazakstan, Nursultan Nazarbaev, pointed out that:

> "The results of the high-level meeting in Copenhagen have set the groundwork for the social policy of our State for the next few years and beyond".

The Government of Kazakstan gives particular priority to enhancing the effectiveness of the system of social protection for the population by giving it greater focus and clearly defining the duties and financial responsibilities of State administrative bodies at various levels. The Republic is implementing a project on social protection that has been approved by the World Bank and is designed to rationalize the provision of basic social services to the population.

The Republic of Kazakstan is exploring various ways and means of cooperating with the United Nations and other international organizations in the field of public administration. We are pleased to note that, through international seminars, meetings and conferences convened by the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions, a broad exchange of experience and information is taking place among States on a number of current administrative questions, including the adaption of State institutions to the requirements of democratic reform, the promotion of economic reform, training personnel and so on.

One example of useful cooperation was the convening in May 1995, in Kazakstan, of an international seminar on the subject of investment and conditions for moving into a market economy. The seminar was organized by the United Nations Department for Development Support and Management Services in cooperation with the Government of Kazakstan.

The seminar brought together representatives of States with varied experience in implementing investment policies. The very thorough discussion that took place afforded, in the opinion of the participants, an opportunity to become familiar with national approaches to questions of investment under conditions of transition to a market economy.

Kazakstan will continue to broaden its cooperation with the United Nations and welcomes the efforts being made by the Organization to improve the public administration systems and strengthen the human resources potentials of countries with economies in transition.

The recommendations and decisions that emerge from the current resumed session will undoubtedly give a new impetus to concerting the efforts and pooling the knowledge of the international community in order to improve institutions of public administration, creating conditions for sustainable development and improving the well-being of peoples.

The Republic of Kazakstan intends to continue to cooperate constructively with the States Members of the United Nations in achieving our common goals.

The Acting President (*interpretation from French*): I now call on Mr. Ognyan Panov, Head of the Department for Administrative Reform, Council of Ministers of Bulgaria.

Mr. Panov (Bulgaria): My delegation welcomes the convening of the resumed fiftieth session of the General Assembly for the purpose of holding a comprehensive discussion on the issue of public administration. We appreciate the Secretary-General's introduction of his report (A/50/847) on public administration and development. We have taken note of the report (A/50/525) of the Group of Experts on Public Administration and Finance, which we found very interesting.

Having heard the previous speakers, it can safely be said that administrative reforms are in the making in many countries, particularly in all countries in transition. For the latter, such reforms have turned out to be more than an introduction of modern trends into public services. They are, rather, a process of critical importance for any new democratic society faced with the challenges of making the transition from a centrally planned to a market economy.

Years of experience have taught us that a new, professional, citizen-oriented State administration, loyal to the Government, is needed. In this regard, several prerequisites could be spelt out. In our view, an administration should, *inter alia*, be responsive to the needs of society and of citizens, provide for social goals and market economy regulations, support private initiative and the promotion of the private sector and achieve cost-effectiveness and efficiency.

The Bulgarian Government recently submitted an official application for full membership in the European Union. We have started a complex dialogue for admission that will certainly impose higher standards on our administration. To that end, in March 1996 the Government committee for European integration adopted a strategy for administrative reform entitled "The new administration". The name speaks for itself.

As highlighted in our blueprint for administrative reform, we consider that making changes in our administration will require time and constant adjustment to the new realities and to the needs of Bulgarian citizens. In this regard, the following priority objectives, which we hope to achieve in the near future, have been put forward: first, a performance-based evaluation of the functions, structures and size of the State administration; secondly, decentralization and the enhancement of the role of the local administration, coupled with up-to-date training; thirdly, the use of information technologies for performance evaluation and service orientation; and fourthly, the introduction of new incentives for quality services and professional skills.

My delegation would like to indicate its willingness to share with other countries its experience in the field of administrative reform. We are confident that the United Nations initiative to hold a session of the General Assembly on public administration and development has provided us with a good opportunity and will prove quite useful.

In conclusion, my delegation would like to express its positions regarding the follow-up to this resumed session.

First, we share the view that at the international level, the main responsibility of the United Nations system in dealing with public administration and development should rest with the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary bodies.

Secondly, the activities of the United Nations in the area of public administration and finance should be optimized, taking into account the areas of priority identified at the twelfth meeting of Experts. In this context, the United Nations Development Programme, which is already actively engaged in many of these areas, should play a major role.

Thirdly, a specific mandate in the area of public administration should be envisaged for the Economic Commission for Europe as well.

And fourthly, greater complementarity should be promoted between multilateral and bilateral cooperation programmes.

The Acting President (*interpretation from French*): I now call on His Excellency Mr. Kamal Nasser, Minister for Public Administration and Development of Jordan.

Mr. Nasser (Jordan) (*interpretation from Arabic*): I have the honour today to represent my country, Jordan, at the resumed fiftieth session of the United Nations General Assembly on public administration and development to discuss a very important subject: the role that public administration should play to effectively enhance development requirements in different fields.

I should like to take this opportunity to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to all those who took part in the preparations for this meeting, which is aimed at finding the most beneficial methods by which a qualitative move can be made to enhance the abilities of public agencies in different countries and to strengthen the capabilities of the United Nations to activate those abilities, in order to establish a solid basis for development in various domains.

Public administration in Jordan is composed of all ministries, public corporations and departments that either supervise or participate in developmental activities at all levels, whether political, social, cultural or economic, in full cooperation with the private sector and with Arab and foreign agencies, organizations and States.

For decades, Jordan has been fortunate to have outstanding leadership at the head of its public administration, imbued with a clear vision and a creative ability to envisage the future and specify the steps needed to lay down the practical framework of development. That leadership has been able, at this stage, to put the final touches on peace-building, with the hope that our region will become a peaceful area that can easily attract investments and investors to speed up the pace of development.

Jordan's external and internal policies, based on full respect for the Charter and the resolutions of the United Nations, are very sound and stable.

We are thus honoured to represent Jordan in supporting the United Nations recommendations in the field of development. We also value the exchange of views and experiences in this field with representatives from other countries, and we wish to associate ourselves with the Group of Experts, which was able to properly design the general framework, laying the strong foundations on which development is to be established, drawing the support of the United Nations to the Jordanian projects that have emanated from the era of peace.

After studying the report (A/50/525) of the Group of Experts on Public Administration and Finance on its twelfth meeting and taking its recommendations into consideration, the Jordanian Government would like to express its full support for the conclusions and recommendations of the report and wishes to present its own priorities in public administration and development.

In the field of government capacity for policy development and formulation, restructuring administrative systems, reforming civil service and developing human resources and training in the field of public administration, a consolidated administrative development plan was approved in Jordan by the Prime Minister for civil servants at all levels. This plan is now being implemented by the Institute of Public Administration.

The concept of putting citizens first was viewed as a primary necessity, so that by simplifying procedures and delegating authority citizens' transactions could be accomplished in a fast, simple and feasible manner.

The Government of Jordan is also in the process of developing civil service regulations to ensure legality, objectivity and fairness in recruitment matters.

Furthermore, Jordan has adopted a national information project for public administration that seeks to create a useful network for the exchange of information in the development field.

A number of public agencies were restructured to enable them to concentrate on planning, control and follow-up functions rather than interfering in direct production and implementation activities.

This administrative plan laid out by the Government of Jordan is ambitious and needs all kinds of support from the United Nations, especially from the General Assembly. The existence of democracy and peace in Jordan underlines the importance of this plan. The political will of the Jordanian Government was very apparent in crystallizing the concepts contained in the plan.

In the field of environmental protection, a national information strategy was formulated in Jordan and a new public corporation to protect the environment was established. What is needed now is support for this strategy, endorsement of the steps taken by this corporation and assistance in the design and implementation of projects relating to environment and natural resources in Jordan.

In the field of social development, the emphasis was placed on family and childhood concerns, poverty eradication, fighting unemployment, family reproductive projects, special education, employment of the disabled and the development of local community centres.

We request the United Nations to support the efforts to unify the components of the social assistance network, social protection, the national strategy for population — adopted recently by the Jordanian Prime Minister's office — and the strategy for social development. We also request it to follow up the drafting of child-related laws and to help raise the standard of public administration in the social fields to ensure that human services are rendered equitably to those who deserve them.

As regards the structuring of private and public sector interrelationships, public policy in Jordan stresses the need for innovation in the private sector economy, encourages the privatization of public agencies and lays the appropriate groundwork to attract investments. An independent corporation for the promotion of investment was established, and we hope that it will be supported.

In the field of financial and fiscal management, the Government concentrated on enhancing the managerial and technical capabilities of civil servants to follow up the implementation of the economic rehabilitation and rectification program of 1996-1998, in order to achieve an increase in the gross national product. We request that the United Nations provide needed support for Jordan in reducing its debt burden to enable it to maintain its fiscal stability and contain the pressures of inflation.

In the field of infrastructure programmes, Jordan's priorities are concentrated on ensuring a high level of awareness of the importance of maintenance, especially technical maintenance, in the continuation of the developmental process. It also stresses the importance of investment in basic elements of infrastructure, such as water, electrical resources, telecommunications services, a national roads network, meteorology, the establishment of railroads throughout the Kingdom and the expansion of the port of Aqaba.

In the field of development projects, we request the United Nations to assist Jordan in establishing a highly qualified group of experts, with interdisciplinary perspectives, to be responsible for the accurate analysis of public policies in order to ensure that development budgets do not bear the burden of political projects. This group would also be responsible for conducting negotiations regarding projects financed through loans, grants and assistantships to guarantee that agreements on those projects are not contradictory.

Jordan recommends and supports the idea of converting the Group of Experts into a United Nations body similar to the Statistical Commission and the Population Commission. Jordan suggests that the new body be named the "public administration and development committee" and that it serve as the only mechanism playing an important role in public administration and development. It would also be expected to work as a technical committee and a liaison between the United Nations and individual countries, to ensure the best possible cooperation and follow-up for all public administration projects adopted by the United Nations.

Jordan supports the idea of convening an international conference to finance development and further supports the idea of providing mechanisms that would guarantee the success of such a conference. Developing countries would especially benefit greatly from such a conference, which should be convened in a developing country and be financed by the United Nations. Jordan stands ready to host such a conference if the financing for it can be secured.

The Government of Jordan is in the process of producing a national strategy to combat corruption and counter-productive bureaucracy. This strategy is based on public awareness programmes, the modification of outdated regulations and the introduction of new and just regulation frameworks to ensure the prevention of all forms of corruption. This proposed strategy, based largely on civil service ethics, will concentrate on administrative training and culture and stress the efficient control of management functions.

Once again, I wish the General Assembly all success in its resumed fiftieth session, and I hope that it will have support in the various fields of development in every way required and in every way possible.

For the sake of brevity, in my statement I have summarized the working paper that covers the development projects in Jordan requiring support and that will be circulated to representatives. A translation of the administrative development plan, which outlines the interrelationships between all forms of administration and development, is also included.

The Acting President *(interpretation from French)*: I now call on the representative of Sweden.

Mr. Osvald (Sweden): Sweden shares fully the views expressed earlier by Italy on behalf of the European Union. The importance Sweden attaches to the issue of public administration, democratization and good governance in promoting social development has been manifested over the years. One recent example which comes to mind is of course the United Nations Conference and Workshop on Public Administration and Social Development, held in Stockholm last October as part of the preparations leading up to this resumed session. The Swedish Government hosted the Conference, and the report from Stockholm has been distributed as an official document of the General Assembly at this session.

Sweden is in the process of reviewing its foreign and development cooperation policy, making it an instrument in a comprehensive Swedish foreign policy with three aims: peace, democracy and development.

These objectives are clearly interrelated. In most parts of the world the threat today is not a foreign army but, rather, poverty, environmental degradation and social and political tension nourished by misery and humiliation. Security is no longer primarily a military matter. The achievement of lasting and sustainable peace requires confidence-building, justice and equal opportunities.

We have learned that a democratic culture provides greater potential for conflict prevention and resolution. Continued democratization within countries must be encouraged, underpinning a democratic international community.

Sweden is honoured to host the recently established International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), which supports democratization processes throughout the world. Fourteen countries and several international organizations have come together to complement the work of the United Nations and non-governmental organizations and to work for the long-term strengthening of democracy. I believe that many of the issues before this resumed session on public administration and development are directly relevant to the focus of IDEA — for example, local democracy.

Over the last few years a number of global United Nations conferences have reflected the major challenges facing the international community. Last spring in Copenhagen, at the social Summit, countries agreed on that.

> "Democracy and transparent and accountable governance and administration … are indispensable foundations for the realization of social and people-centred sustainable development." *(A/CONF.166/9, chap. I, annex I, para. 4)*

The participating Governments committed themselves to reinforcing the means and capacities for people to participate in the formulation and implementation of social and economic policies and programmes through decentralization, open management of public institutions and strengthening the abilities and opportunities of civil society and local communities to develop their own organizations, resources and activities.

It goes without saying that one key factor in the follow-up and implementation of these different commitments and objectives is the existence of professional public management at all levels of society.

It is sad that this needs to be said. After a decade of simplistic messages about how much the market can do, it is time to recall the central and crucial role of public responsibility. That is what makes the difference between a social market economy and an unregulated market economy.

How, then, can we promote the establishment and improvement, or both, of the capability of our respective societies when it comes to good governance and efficient public management?

Sound policies are necessary, but without the capacity to operationalize and distribute political reforms, citizens may lose confidence in the political process. The development of a civil society and a democratic market economy requires the development of appropriate and legitimate public institutions.

These include, for example, a working parliament, efficient local government, a strong ministry of finance, effective taxation and customs organizations, a well-organized central bank, a reliable statistical office, a system for selecting and training the civil service and so on.

But the question is also how we can design a structure which is not only an instrument for a State, region or community, but also, in itself, a guiding spirit for democracy and transparency.

Local communities, non-governmental organizations, minority groups, labour unions and people, which public administration systems should serve, must be active participants when promoting respect for democracy and the rule of law.

This session of the General Assembly provides a valuable opportunity for the international community to exchange views on a crucial subject for sustainable development. We are attracted by the idea of designating specific sessions of the General Assembly to various themes of importance. This working method could perhaps be used more frequently when addressing global issues in the future.

The Acting President *(interpretation from French)*: I now call on the representative of Nepal.

Mr. Shah (Nepal): My delegation welcomes the opportunity provided by the resumed fiftieth session of the General Assembly to examine the question of public administration and development, particularly in developing countries and those with economies in transition.

The decade of the nineties has brought a multitude of challenges and opportunities, and to prepare themselves for the advent of the twenty-first century all nations, large and small, developed and developing, are being forced to rethink the issues of public administration and development. Our Organization itself is currently undergoing a process of reform with the objective, in a nutshell, of doing more with less — with enhanced accountability, transparency, efficiency and representativeness, without, hopefully, losing sight of its basic Charter principles and commitment to humanity.

My delegation recognizes the reality of the uniqueness of each country's system in public administration and development. As a functioning democracy with an irrevocable commitment to basic human rights, my country believes that it is equally important that in the emerging international environment we recognize the existence of a generally applicable set of principles of public administration and its role in development. Greater productivity, accountability, transparency and responsiveness must be the hallmark of any public administrative system.

While underlining the universal character of good governance, I hardly need emphasize the importance of public administration in development. The role of public administration is indispensable in effecting a smooth transfer from centralized planning and implementation to decentralization, from a centrally planned economy to a market economy, from State-run enterprises to privatization. Notwithstanding the increasing and effective role of the private sector as a vehicle for rapid and sustainable economic growth and development, and the existence of complementarity of roles between the public and private sectors and non-governmental organizations in accelerating the pace of socio-economic development, it is the government which plays a central role in developing basic infrastructure, combating socio-economic disparities, defining priority areas of development and carrying out such essential functions as, for example, maintaining peace and order, safeguarding democracy and the fundamental rights of citizens and preserving the environment. Even with regard to the effective functioning of the private sector and the non-governmental organizations, it is public administration which must create the necessary conditions.

My delegation is highly impressed with Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali's assertion in his opening statement that democratization is the single most important factor for improved public administration. Democratization and good governance, in our view, are synonymous. Without participatory decision-making, effective, responsive, transparent and responsible public administration is simply not possible. Democracy is the only system of governance which provides a common and uniform incentive to public servants for maximum efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of goods and services for development. Only democracy places people at the centre of all development endeavours. In every democratic society, public administration should have a basic obligation to apprise citizens of any important measures being planned so that they can involve themselves in participatory decision-making. In this connection, I should like to add that the Constitution of Nepal guarantees the justifiable fundamental right of all citizens to seek and obtain, except as otherwise stipulated in specific laws, information about any matter of public importance.

The draft resolution contained in document A/50/L.69, introduced by the Minister of Morocco, would have the General Assembly recommend that appropriate machinery be established to ensure maximum coordination of activities between the United Nations programme in public administration, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Bretton Woods institutions. It also recommends that the Group of Experts on Public Administration and Finance be designated the United Nations Committee on Public Administration and Development. Under the terms of the draft resolution, the General Assembly would recognize the need to further define the role of the United Nations as a global centre of excellence in the field of public administration and development and to optimize this role to make it more responsive to emerging public management issues relating to sustainable development. The Assembly would also recognize the need for Member States to strengthen their capacities for effective public administration, to promote economic growth and sustainable development and to establish conditions for good governance in which the private sector and the non-governmental organizations can play an increasingly meaningful role.

It is with great pleasure that my delegation announces its support for the draft resolution.

The Acting President *(interpretation from French)*: I call on Professor Antonios Makrydimitris, Professor of Public Administration, University of Athens, Greece.

Mr. Makrydimitris (Greece): The delegation of Greece would like to add its voice to those of its partners in the European Union and other Member States in warmly congratulating the Secretary-General on his report, and the Government of Morocco on this initiative.

It is indeed a historic moment when the General Assembly of the United Nations meets for the first time to discuss specifically the question of public administration and its role in development and modernization.

The report of the Group of Experts on Public Administration and Finance is a valuable document which marks this historic moment of global thinking and deliberation on the problems related to administrative modernization and reform.

This resumed session could not be more timely. It comes against the backdrop of 10 to 15 years of sad neglect. Government and administration, once viewed as the steam engine and the indispensable machinery for modernization and reform, were, however, during this period, downplayed and criticized as oversized, costly, unproductive, bureaucratic and ineffective; in short, government and administration were considered an obstacle rather than an instrument for modernization and reform.

As a result, measures of reform were initiated in various countries all over the world aimed at limiting the waste and reducing the cost of public services and at raising the quality of administrative performance.

The spirit of reform has helped introduce a new emphasis on cost-consciousness, efficiency, effectiveness and lean and flexible management structures and procedures. It has also given rise to a new paradigm of market-oriented and citizen-responsive public services run according to the rules and axioms of public management orthodoxy — a paradigm that claims to differ substantially from old-fashioned bureaucracies of the past.

Carried too far, however, and dogmatically pursued with narrow, short-term objectives, this kind of management-inspired administrative reform might prove destabilizing and could undermine the critical capacity of Governments to manage complex problems of the real world, to plan for the future and to preserve the conditions of peaceful social association which are essential for civilized coexistence in and between societies.

As a matter of fact, the world today is full of telling examples of success and stories of failure, of well- and ill-conceived, properly steered and poorly executed plans and strategies of reform and change in State bureaucracies and administrations.

In other words, there is a wealth of data and experience from which to learn and draw conclusions.

Indeed, there is no better time or place than this resumed session of the General Assembly to elaborate on the necessary lessons that come out of this world-wide experience.

The twentieth century has, according to major historians, already ended, since its basic features have been conclusively shaped. We stand now at the threshold of a new century, a new millennium and a new era. This is an era of rapid change and transformation which is technologically driven on a global scale and in global dimensions. It is hardly surprising that this era of change presents new challenges, risks and opportunities which affect the human race as a whole.

The condition of the world's environment, rapid demographic growth and the massive displacement of populations, with the attendant problems of human rights, are only obvious examples.

Whether we tackle and resolve those problems satisfactorily or not will depend to a large extent on the solutions we adopt and apply. This in turn depends on the management and policy-making capacities of the administrative structures of the Member States.

This places a heavy burden on Governments and on the plans and strategies for reform which they adopt. During this week we have had the opportunity to inform ourselves about them and take a bird's eye view of the common problems and the various strategies adopted to deal with them. There is no doubt that this information represents a most valuable asset in the hands of reformers and modernizers all over the world.

In that respect, the role of the United Nations is also crucial in providing a standing information centre and focal point for the exchange of data, experience, advice and models of reform. The experience must be shared on a global scale because the problems we are facing are global in their nature and implications.

Enhancing the role of the United Nations as, in the words of the report of the Group of Experts,

> "a global depository for exchange of information and as a central research clearing-house for public administration and development" (*A/50/525, para. 159*)

would perhaps require another look at the institutional machinery of the United Nations.

In particular, it seems appropriate that, first, the issue of public administration reform and development should be included as a regular item and be reviewed and considered on a regular basis every two years or so in the agendas of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. It should be noted that this is acknowledged by the Secretary-General in his report.

Secondly, an interim and follow-up mechanism, such as the Committee on Public Administration and Development, should be set up. The Committee, working in close collaboration with the consultative group, would meet annually and prepare the ground for the sessions of the General Assembly. Moreover, the Committee could gradually evolve into an international watchdog on public administration and development and prove instrumental in drafting an international code of ethics and standards of conduct for public officials. This code could then be brought before the General Assembly to be discussed and presented to Member States for endorsement and application.

Thirdly, regional and subregional initiatives should be welcomed with the aim of establishing periodic opportunities for sharing experiences and exchanging views and information with regard to particular issues and concerns relating to administrative modernization and development.

The significance of this kind of regional or subregional cooperation in public administration and reform can hardly be disputed, because of its role not only in enhancing investment, economic development and modernization, but also in improving the conditions of peaceful coexistence and mutual understanding.

It has been said that the only thing that history teaches us is that it never teaches us anything. Yet, to take a more optimistic view, we should not miss this historic opportunity to make some progress and launch a new era of international cooperation in the field of public administration and development.

The Acting President (*interpretation from French*): In accordance with resolution 31/3 of 18 October 1976, I now call on Mr. Mohan Kaul, Director of the Management and Training Services Division of the Commonwealth Secretariat.

Mr. Kaul (Commonwealth Secretariat): I bring with me the greetings of the Commonwealth Secretary General, His Excellency Chief Emeka Anyaoku, and would like to thank you, Mr. Acting President, on his behalf for the opportunity given to the Commonwealth to participate in the resumed fiftieth session of the General Assembly on public administration and development.

The Commonwealth Secretariat has had the privilege of participating in various activities in preparation for this session. The Secretariat was represented in the Group of Experts on Public Administration and Finance, and it also collaborated with the United Nations in organizing the regional meetings in Africa and Asia.

The Harare Commonwealth Declaration of 1991 identified just and honest government as key components of Commonwealth values. Commonwealth assistance to member States in the promotion of good governance and accountable administration has, accordingly, since been included as one of the priority programme areas in the Secretariat's work plan, in recognition of the fact that an efficient public service is a necessary part of the underpinning of just and honest government.

Commonwealth cooperation in relation to public administration is facilitated immeasurably by the many common features that exist among all Commonwealth countries in respect of institutions, systems, traditions and values within the public service. This has resulted in a considerable sharing of both problems and achievements among public servants and political leaders throughout the Commonwealth. One of the outcomes of such cooperation has been the Secretariat's work on the preparation of a portfolio and profiles of good practices in public service management in Commonwealth countries.

Many Commonwealth countries have adopted similar strategies for reform, emphasizing, for example, a redefinition of the relationship between policy-making and administration; greater accountability, task definition, performance measurement and devolution of the control of resources; the need for closer collaboration with the private sector; the acceptance of continuing organizational change; and the importance of the notion of service quality.

To further strengthen Commonwealth cooperation and assistance in this area, Commonwealth Heads of Government endorsed, at their meeting in Auckland in November 1995, the Commonwealth Secretary General's initiative on public service reforms, entitled "Towards a new public administration". The initiative aims to provide an enhanced and integrated programme of assistance to member countries, incorporating advice, training and policy analysis, and focuses on the design of overall public service reform strategies, the implementation of specific components of reform programmes and the development of national capacities to sustain reform.

The initiative will be implemented in close collaboration with the United Nations, as well as bilateral and other agencies, including three pan-Commonwealth non-governmental organizations: the Commonwealth Association for Public Administration and Management (CAPAM), a network of senior policy and decision makers in the public and private sector; the Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF), an organization which supports good governance at the local level; and the Commonwealth Network on Information Technology for Development (COMNET-IT), a network of institutions and professionals promoting the use of information technology and global networks in government.

In conclusion, may I once again thank you, Mr. Acting President, for providing this opportunity for us to share our experiences with the General Assembly and reaffirm our willingness and desire to continue to collaborate with the United Nations in this important area of public administration and development.

The Acting President (*interpretation from French*): In accordance with resolution 477 (V) of 1 November

1950, I now call on Mr. Ahmed Sakr Ashour, Director-General of the Arab Administrative Development Organization of the League of Arab States.

Mr. Ashour (League of Arab States) (*interpretation from Arabic*): I am grateful for the opportunity to address this Assembly. I also wish to commend the initiative taken by the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco and the positive response of the General Assembly to the call of the 1994 Tangier Declaration in devoting its resumed fiftieth session to the theme of public administration and development. Cumulative world experiences throughout the past five decades have proved that administration is one of the key elements, if not the most important element, in the development process.

The Arab Administrative Development Organization (ARADO), which I have the honour to represent, held its Ministerial Assembly meeting in November 1995 to prepare for participation in this resumed session of the General Assembly and to discuss the document prepared by the Group of Experts on Public Administration and Finance. The Ministers decided that a document should be prepared by our organization to express the common views of the Arab countries with respect to the theme of this resumed session.

Against this background, I would like to highlight some of the salient points made in that document, which has been distributed under the symbol A/50/918, and to summarize the needs and priorities of the Arab countries for strengthening the capacity of public administration in support of development.

The priorities and needs of the Arab region, to which the United Nations should give more attention and support, can be summarized as follows. First, there is the need to increase institutional capacity in development policy formulation and management. This is most needed in offices supporting the Cabinet and in the offices of ministers in charge of the economy, public finance, the governorates and private sector institutions. This would include creating decision support centres and strengthening them where they already exist, as well as strengthening the capacity of agencies in charge of implementing development policies and programmes, in addition to those associations and groupings representing the private sector and civil society. This would enhance their participation in policy formulation and implementation processes, as well as strengthen their ability to monitor and follow up these development programmes.

Secondly, there is a need to assist Governments in rationalizing and developing the structures, functions and work procedures of public agencies. Assistance is also needed to improve performance standards and strengthen the system of accountability by emphasizing the quality and effectiveness of public services and outputs and the efficient utilization of available resources.

It is important to strengthen the capacity of local government agencies since they are very close to the citizens' needs and can therefore interact effectively with them.

Fourthly, it is equally important to strengthen the capacity of the system of administration of justice in terms of human resources, equipment and information facilities. Effective processes for dispute settlement improve the investment climate and the performance of the private sector.

Fifthly, it is important to build and develop the capacity of administrative development agencies and to restructure their roles so that the required support can be provided at all levels of government and performance management systems in public agencies can be introduced and effectively applied.

Sixth, special priority needs to be given to rebuilding the capacity of Governments of some countries of the region that have suffered from conflicts and armed struggles, particularly in Somalia, Lebanon and Palestine, to enable them to manage development programmes in an era of peace and stability.

I am pleased to say that all these needs have been addressed in 10 distinct projects, as detailed in the ARADO document submitted to the General Assembly. These projects will guide the efforts of Arab Governments, their institutions, United Nations agencies and other international institutions in meeting their priority needs.

The Arab Administrative Development Organization commends and supports the recommendations and proposals of the Group of Experts, the efforts of the United Nations programme in public administration and the report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly. ARADO particularly supports the recommendations made by the Group of Experts at a meeting held in this Hall on 11 and 12 April 1996, as well as the initiative taken by the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco in submitting the draft resolution introduced by His Excellency Mr. Messaoud Mansouri, the Moroccan Minister, at the first meeting of this resumed session of the General Assembly.

Our organization wishes to submit for the Assembly's consideration some additional proposals and recommendations. Briefly stated, first, it is important to reinforce the role of United Nations agencies responsible for development and administrative reform. We particularly emphasize the role of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations programme in public administration because of their ability to provide effective support for institutional development programmes and to continuously adapt their programmes to a changing policy environment and the need for sustainable development.

Secondly, it is important for these United Nations agencies working in the fields of development and administrative reform to interact more effectively with the regional bodies that are more familiar with the needs, priorities and circumstances of the countries in the region. They are capable of diagnosing the problems in their respective regions and of identifying the most suitable practices. They also have their network of local experts capable of building local capacity. Given the right support, interaction with such establishments can build regional capacities, which, in the long run, will reduce dependence on international institutions.

Thirdly, it is equally important for the United Nations and other international and bilateral agencies to establish partnerships with their counterpart agencies in recipient countries. Such partnerships would facilitate the sharing of experience and responsibilities between them. There is a real need to build a new model of the relationship between donors and recipients in order to strengthen the local and national capacities for continuing self-development, for learning from experience and constant evaluation and for measuring the improvements achieved in the performance of target institutions.

There is also a need for effective coordination of programmes offered by the United Nations agencies and other international and bilateral agencies concerned with economic reform and administrative development in order to achieve better coordination between them in their dealings with and exchange of expertise with recipient countries.

In conclusion, I wish to recommend that, in order to achieve the objectives of this resumed session of the Assembly, a permanent forum be established for identifying and propagating the best administrative practices and experiences and for facilitating exchanges of experience between States. Such a forum should collect, monitor and analyse initiatives taken or programmes conducted by various countries, in implementation of the resolutions to be adopted by the General Assembly. The results should be contained in a report, issued, for example, every two years, on the real implementation of administrative reform in support of development at the global level.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.